

574  
*Supplement to The London Naturalist.*



THE  
LONDON  
BIRD REPORT

FOR  
1941

An Annual Report on Bird-Life within Twenty Miles of  
St Paul's Cathedral.

EDITED BY

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Price, 1s 6d.

PUBLISHED BY THE  
LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,  
THE LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE & TROPICAL MEDICINE,  
KEPPEL STREET, GOWER STREET, LONDON, W.C.1.

DATE OF PUBLICATION, SEPTEMBER 1942.

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## **BACK NUMBERS OF THE LONDON BIRD REPORT.**

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Copies of the *London Bird Report* for 1936, 1937, and 1939-41 may be had, price 1s 6d (1s to members of the Society), from the Recorder, R. S. R. Fitter, 39 South Grove House, Highgate, N.6, or from the General Secretary of the Society, A. B. Hornblower, 91 Queen's Road, Buckhurst Hill, Essex. The Report for 1936 contains a map showing the boundary of the Society's area, a radius of twenty miles from St Paul's Cathedral. The 1938 Report is out of print; it would be much appreciated if Members who have copies of this Report for which they have no further use would send them to the Recorder for file purposes, and supply to scientific workers and libraries.



## The London Bird Report, 1941.

THE sixth issue of the *London Bird Report* covers the second full year of the war, but though there has been a slight decrease in the number of observers sending in notes, the volume and quality of the records received has been well maintained. Happily, the areas where observations can be carried on have not been further restricted; Waterfowl enthusiasts have been able to concentrate on the Thames between Putney and Richmond, with the adjacent Lonsdale Road Reservoirs. These small reservoirs must surely be the most productive stretches of water of their size anywhere in the kingdom—in 1941 they yielded to the watcher's glass an Iceland Gull and ten species of duck, including Sheld-Duck, Gadwall, Pintail, Scaup, Goosander and Smew. In addition, the Brent, Elstree and Ruislip Reservoirs have remained accessible, and parts of Staines and Walthamstow Reservoirs can be seen from public rights of way.

The cold weather early in the year did not produce ornithological phenomena comparable to those of December 1938 and January and February 1940, though the continuance of easterly winds until well into June made the 1941 season generally a late one. Among the outstanding events of the year may be mentioned a pair of Black Redstarts breeding for the second year in succession in Westminster and at least three other birds being present in Inner London; a Hoopoe at Whitewebbs Park, Enfield, during May and June; four Whooper Swans in January and a Gannet in June on Connaught Water in Epping Forest; another Gannet on the Thames at Waterloo Bridge in January; and the breeding of the Corncrake at Westerham. Unusual Gulls seen included a Glaucous Gull on the Round Pond in Kensington Gardens in December, two Iceland Gulls on the Thames at Hammersmith in the same month, a Kittiwake on the Thames at Westminster in April and two more at the Ham Gravel Pits, opposite Teddington, in June. Among birds which probably occur regularly in the area on passage, but are often overlooked, the following are especially noteworthy: two Mealy Redpolls at Tadworth in April, a Blue-headed Wagtail at Chingford in August, a Pied Flycatcher at Woodford Green and another at Chiswick, both in May, Northern Golden Plovers at Waltham Cross in April, and a Stone-Curlew at Chingford in April. Most interesting of all was the large number of Firecrests detected during the year: one at Mickleham in February, one at Gerrard's Cross in March, one at Stanmore in April, and one at Epsom and two at Ruislip in December; this was half as many again as have been reported in the London area during the whole period since 1900.

Interesting recoveries of birds ringed in the London area and reported since our last issue include a Blackbird ringed in Woodford Green and recovered in Wigtonshire, and two Black-headed Gulls ringed at Littleton and on the Thames and recovered in Estonia and Sweden respectively.

Owing to the difficulty of searching the back literature in war-time, no summaries have been prepared of the three species selected by the British Trust for Ornithology for special study in 1941 (Lesser White-throat, Kingfisher, and Common Snipe), though the more interesting records received for 1941 are included in the *Report*; and no species have been selected by the Trust for 1942. The most important Trust inquiry in which members of the Society are participating in 1942 is the Woodpigeon Inquiry, which should have priority with all bird-watchers owing to its importance for the war effort. The Recorder will be glad to supply details to any members who would like to help in collecting information about this agricultural pest.

All the records in the specific notes are for 1941, except where otherwise indicated. The initials after each record show the observer or observers responsible for it. The six counties which come within the 20-mile radius of St Paul's Cathedral are indicated by their initials, viz.: B.=Bucks; E.=Essex; H.=Herts; K.=Kent; M.=Middlesex; S.=Surrey. The following abbreviations are also used: *B.B.* = *British Birds* magazine; *L.B.R.* = *London Bird Report*; *O.B.R.* = *Report of the Oxford Ornithological Society on the Birds of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire*, 1941; *Res.*=Reservoir; *S.E.B.R.*=*South-Eastern Bird Report*, 1941; *S.F.*=Sewage Farm.

The Records Committee of the Ornithological Section (Chairman, L. Parmenter) wishes to express its thanks to the following 99 observers who have sent in notes or supplied information during the year, and especially to Mrs E. D. Parrinder and Mr C. B. Ashby for help with entering up the records.

\*(per R.S.R.F.).

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## Birds in the London Area, 1941.

### A REPORT ON BIRD-LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

#### **Rook.** *Corvus f. frugilegus* L.

- H. Several seen on Jan. 27 trying to feed from the surface of the R. Chess on Croxley Moors (J.A.S.).  
 M. Rookeries in Bushy and Hampton Court Parks were deserted, possibly owing to enemy action (J.E.R.).

#### **Magpie.** *Pica p. pica* (L.).

- M. One seen eating eggs from a Chaffinch's nest, Bushy Park, June 23 (J.E.R.).

#### **British Jay.** *Garrulus glandarius rufitergum* Hart.

- E. Near High Beach on Apr. 6, one gave several shrill imitations of the "kiew" note of the Little Owl and was answered in the distance (E.R.P.).  
 M. Kensington Gardens, four on Feb. 2 (E.G.P.); a pair which stayed all the summer may have bred, as three were seen together in Oct.; the pair was last seen on Dec. 5 (G.C.L.). Green Park, one on Nov. 14 (E.M.N.).

#### **Hawfinch.** *Coccothraustes c. coccothraustes* (L.).

- B. Langley Park, two on May 4 (C.A.W.); also in breeding season at Black Park (O.B.R., p. 8).  
 E. Very numerous in Epping Forest and environs in breeding season; young birds seen at Bury Wood, Fairmead Bottom, and Wake Arms, and adult carrying nesting material near Queen Elizabeth's Lodge (K.E.H.). Flock of 19 in black poplar on Whitehall Plain, Dec. 31 (S.A., W.A.W.).  
 H. Cuffley Great Wood, small parties frequently observed in winter up to Apr. 6, maxima being 18 on Mar. 9 and Apr. 6; on these and two other dates birds were watched gathering together on a dead oak in the late afternoon; few seen in breeding season, but a young bird was seen with two others on July 6 (E.D.P., E.R.P.). Watford area, one on July 10 (J.A.S.).  
 K. Bickley, one on Feb. 17 and Nov. 25 (R.W.H.). Westerham, resident in small numbers (P.A.A.).  
 M. Ken Wood, one on Apr. 19 (R.S.R.F.). Whitewebbs Park, one to three in breeding season (H.G.A., K.E.H., E.D.P.).

- S. Many records from usual localities mentioned in *L.B.R.* for 1940 (p. 3). Woodmansterne, nested (C.M.A., J.E.R.). Walton-on-the-Hill, flocks of 9 and 28 on Apr. 6 (H.B.).

**Greenfinch.** *Chloris c. chloris* (L.).

- M. Southall, one ringed on Jan. 28, 1940, was recovered at Offley, Herts, in June 1941 (*B.B.*, 35, 150).

**British Goldfinch.** *Carduelis c. britannica* (Hart.).

- B. A pair near Denham Station on June 22 were behaving as though they had a nest nearby (R.S.R.F.). Young birds seen at Langley on July 6 and again in Sept. and Oct. (A.V.T.).
- E. Woodford Green area, seen in breeding season (K.E.H.). Hornchurch, young with adults in flock of c. 20, East Nelms Wood, Aug. to Oct. (R.Ph.D.).
- K. Westerham, bred in small numbers (P.A.A.).
- M. Young birds seen with adults by Lea Valley sand-pits on June 14 (A.G.R., F.J.R.). Enfield, a pair in Town Park, June 3 (A.H.V.S.).
- S. Chelsham, bred (H.E.P.). Battersea Park, several on Oct. 29 (T.L.B.). Worcester Park, nests freely and flocks of 50-60 later resort to gardens, feeding on seeds of garden flowers, especially *Cosmos* (R.S.P.). Also reported in breeding season from Epsom Common, Ewell, Ham, Kew Gardens and Surbiton.

**Siskin.** *Carduelis spinus* (L.).

- B. Horton, 40-50 in alders on Feb. 9 (*O.B.R.*, p. 8).
- E. Highams Park, two with Goldfinches on alders in early Jan., and nine on Dec. 31 (S.A., K.E.H., W.A.W.).
- H. Cassiobury Park, c. 70 on Jan. 5 (J.A.S.). Cuffley Great Wood, two in conifers on Feb. 9 (E.R.P.).
- K. Petts Wood, eight on Nov. 8 (R.W.H.).
- M. Brent Park, four on Feb. 21, c. 30 between Dec. 2 and 22 (E.C.O.), and one on Dec. 28 (G.W.). Bushy Park, c. 150 on Feb. 19; c. 50 with redpolls on alders and birches on Mar. 16 and 20 (J.E.R.); ten, probably all males, feeding on alders and acacias on July 27 and 29 had been seen by keeper on July 23, but had gone by Aug. 2 (E.W.P.); numerous again in Dec. (J.E.R.). Eastcote, at least one, probably three, on Scots fir near alders on Mar. 23 (T.L.B.). Uxbridge, c. 30 with redpolls on alders near Fray's River on Nov. 29 (T.B.).
- S. Godstone, one on Nov. 15 (H.B., L.I.C., A.C.G.P.). Reigate Heath, 21 on Dec. 6 (H.B., L.I.C.).

**Mealy Redpoll.** *Carduelis f. flammea* (L.).

- S. Tadworth, a pair seen on Apr. 6 by H.B., who writes:

"I have no hesitation in including this record. The birds were in a birch-tree about four feet from the ground, and I had a view from some ten feet distance. The male was nearly white on the breast, except for a faint pink tinge on the upper portion; flanks light grey. Female almost white on breast, except for a few dark streaks; flanks light grey, and back showed a good deal of white and greyish streaks."

**Lesser Redpoll.** *Carduelis flammea cabaret* (P. L. S. Müll.).

- M. Reported from Hampstead Heath and Stanmore Common in the breeding season. A flock of c. 30 seen on Stanmore Common on Apr. 21 by R.S.R.F. included several larger birds, one of which, seen at close range, though in poor light, was paler, streakier, and had very light flanks and a light patch down the back to the rump. A flock of c. 100 on alders near Fray's River, Uxbridge, on Nov. 16 (T.B.).
- S. Reported in the breeding season, and probably bred, at Ewell, Kew Gardens and Surbiton.

**Linnet.** *Carduelis cannabina cannabina* (L.).

- E. A female sang a short phrase of song on Woodford Golf Links on June 27 (K.E.H.).

**British Bullfinch.** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula nesa* Math. & Ired.

- E. On Mar. 16, at Whitehall Plain, Chingford, K.E.H. heard five males and a female uttering rapidly a note similar to the chii-chii-chii of a nuthatch. This is possibly the spring call referred to by Nicholson ("Songs of Wild Birds," p. 87).

**Brambling.** *Fringilla montifringilla* L.

- E. Epping Forest, small numbers in Oct. and Nov.
- H. Watford Park, one with Chaffinches on Nov. 7 (I.B.S.).
- K. Abundant in Shoreham district in mid-December, also present in beech-avenues round Sevenoaks (S.E.B.R.).
- S. Small numbers reported from usual North Downs haunts. Tadworth, a late cock on Apr. 26-27 (H.B.).

**Corn-Bunting.** *Emberiza calandra* L.

- E. Three singing near Hainault Golf Course on July 5; a male, after attempting coition on barbed wire (N.B.—The *Handbook* says coition takes place on the ground), flew towards a post, but seeing observers, swerved to another post a few yards further off, where he took up a position with bill wide open and wings quarter-opened and held horizontally, staying like this facing observers for over 90 seconds (K.E.H., W.A.W.).

**Girl-Bunting.** *Emberiza c. cirrus* L.

- S. Chipstead, a male singing on July 6, and a pair seen frequently on the same spot, July 7-15, probably nested (H.B., L.I.C.). Betchworth, one singing on Sept. 27 (L.I.C.).

**Tree-Sparrow.** *Passer m. montanus* (L.).

- E. Brentwood, two pairs nested as usual in chestnut trees (R.Ph.D.). Great Warley, a pair on May 22; probably breeds (G.K.McC.). Epping Forest and Lea Valley, two nests found in different localities near Chingford, and birds seen during breeding season at various places in the district (K.E.H.). Great Parndon, very common and increasing; occupies nearly all nesting-boxes (G.D.).

- K. Westerham, resident in small numbers (P.A.A.).  
 M. Bred at South Harrow, where two out of five surviving colonies are "having a bad time owing to increase of allotments, tree-felling and bombing" (T.L.B.). Reported from Crews Hill, Osterley Park and Staines Moor in breeding season.  
 S. Beddington S.F., nested in a heap of bricks c. 2 ft. up (H.B., L.I.C.). Tandridge, 60 on Nov. 15 (H.B., L.I.C., A.C.G.P.).

**Wood-Lark.** *Lullula a. arborea* (L.).

- S. A pair on the North Downs near Leatherhead, Apr. 20 (H.J.B.). Wimbledon Common, two feeding on Sept. 28 (C.D.).

**Blue-headed Wagtail.** *Motacilla f. flava* L.

- E. Chingford, one seen at S. end of New Reservoir on Aug. 30 was being worried by Yellow Wagtails; the eye-stripe was very white and the white of the chin extended back beneath the ear-coverts (W.A.W.).

**Yellow Wagtail.** *Motacilla flava flavissima* (Blyth).

- E./H. Bred in the Lea Valley at Broxbourne, Sewardstone and Wormley.  
 H. Croxley Moors, nested as usual (J.A.S.). Stockers Lake, Rickmansworth, at least two pairs in breeding season (G.K.McC.).  
 M. Brentford, a pair bred by the Grand Union Canal (A.F.M.). Kensington Gardens, one over the Round Pond on Aug. 31 and Sept. 4 (G.C.L.). Ponders End, at least 60, mostly immature, on Aug. 2 (K.E.H.).  
 S. Chiswick Bridge, several pairs on June 21 (A.F.M.). Ham Gravel Pits, three pairs on June 16 (A.F.M.).

**Grey Wagtail.** *Motacilla c. cinerea* Tunst.

- H. Watford, the nesting site in Cassiobury Park used for the past six years was not occupied this year, but young birds were seen in the park (J.A.S.).  
 K. Westerham, resident in small numbers (P.A.A.).  
 M. Inner London, one in St James's Park on Sept. 29 (W.R.P.) and one at Tower Bridge on Nov. 15 (C.A.W.). Whitewebbs Park, two by the lake on May 16 (L.J.J.) and July 1 (E.D.P.).  
 S. Fetcham, bred at the Mill Pond (H.J.B., L.I.C.).

**Pied Wagtail.** *Motacilla alba yarrellii* Gould.

- E. Navestock Lake, a roost in reeds on Nov. 22 (K.E.H.).

**White Wagtail.** *Motacilla a. alba* L.

- E. Chingford, one on Apr. 19 (E.M.). Walthamstow Res., a male on Apr. 26 (R.S.R.F., W.A.W.).  
 M. Brent Park, a male on Apr. 27 (E.C.O.). Kensington Gardens, one on the allotments by the Albert Memorial on Mar. 24 was only the second record for Inner London (G.C.L.).  
 S. Beddington S.F., a male on Mar. 23 (R.S.R.F.).

**British Tree-Creeper.** *Certhia familiaris britannica* Ridgw.

- M. Kensington Gardens, one on Feb. 5 and two on Mar. 6 (G.C.L.).



**Blue Tit.** *Parus coeruleus* L. ? subsp.

M. Stepney, a pair stay regularly in a garden in Harford St. from Sept. to Feb. (Miss W. Joseph, *Country Life*, 19.iv.41).

**British Willow-Tit.** *Parus atricapillus kleinschmidti* Hellm.

H. Cuffley Great Wood, one or two seen with mixed flocks of tits on several dates, Feb. to mid-April and also on June 28; on Mar. 30 one was seen to detach itself from the rest of the flock and spend 15 minutes excavating old hole in dead branch of silver birch before rejoining flock (E.D.P., E.R.P.).

K. Westerham, occasionally recorded (P.A.A.).

M. Harefieldmoor Wharf, at least two on Oct. 12 (R.S.R.F.). Ruislip Common, one to three reported by several observers in winter months, but not between Apr. 12 and Aug. 7. Whitewebbs Park, one on July 14 (H.G.A.).

S. Bookham Common, one on May 18 (R.S.R.F., J.E.R.). Burgh Heath, one on Jan. 26 (H.B.). Epsom Common, one on Apr. 27 (R.S.R.F.) and Dec. 25 (C.B.A.). Headley Heath, one on Mar. 8 (H.B., A.C.G.P.). Wimbledon Common, one on Aug. 4 (R.E.W.).

**British Long-tailed Tit.** *Aegithalos caudatus rosaceus* Mathews.

E. While K.E.H. was examining a nest at Connaught Water, Epping Forest, containing eggs and young, c. 15 others, all but one of them adults, arrived and mobbed him.

**Great Grey Shrike.** *Lanius e. excubitor* L.

S. One seen on Ham Common on Feb. 2 later flew into Richmond Park (F.R.M.).

**Red-backed Shrike.** *Lanius e. collurio* L.

B. Denham Golf Course, an immature bird on Aug. 6 (T.B.).

E. Epping Forest, six pairs bred within 1½ miles of Chingford; a cock was seen to take and impale a chiffchaff (K.E.H.). Three pairs seen and one nest found between Nazeing and Waltham Cross (G.D.).

K. Bickley, a pair with young on July 11 (R.W.H.). Westerham, three pairs bred near the Pilgrim's Way (P.A.A.). Otford, a pair on July 1 (S.E.B.R.).

M. Enfield, a pair nested near Hillyfields Park (L.J.J., E.R.P.). Harefield, one pair bred (T.L.B.). Ruislip, three, possibly five, pairs bred (G.K.McC.); a paper describing the larder of a pair of these shrikes on Ruislip Common appeared in *B.B.*, 35, 170.

S. Two pairs bred on Mitcham Common (C.B.A., W.W.T.), and one pair each on Bookham Common (H.J.B.), Epsom Common (C.B.A.) and Limpsfield Common (B.E.B.). At Mitcham Common one pair began incubating the second clutch before the surviving young one of the first brood was fully fledged; on June 26 the hen was flushed from 4 eggs while the young bird of the first brood was still being fed by the cock (C.B.A., W.W.T.).

**Spotted Flycatcher.** *Muscicapa s. striata* (Pall.).

M. In Inner London two pairs nested in Kensington Gardens (G.C.L.), and young were seen in St James's Park (T.L.B.).

**Pied Flycatcher.** *Muscicapa h. hypoleuca* (Pall.).

E. Woodford Green, a male on May 5 (K.E.H., K.D.G.M., W.A.W.).

M. Chiswick, a pair on an apple-tree in a garden on May 19 (R.Pr.D.).

**Goldcrest.** *Regulus regulus* (L.) ? subsp.

M. Kensington Gardens, one on Nov. 4 (G.C.L.).

**Firecrest.** *Regulus i. ignicapillus* (Temm.).

B. Gerrard's Cross, one on Mar. 22, may have been just inside the Society's area (*O.B.R.*, p. 10).

M. Ruislip Common, one seen by T.B. on Nov. 22; the presence of a second bird was then suspected, and this was definitely established by other observers who saw two on Nov. 29, Dec. 5, 7 and 13 (*W.R.P.*, *R.H.M.R.*, *C.A.W.*); one was seen again, Dec. 25 (*R.W.H.*) (See also *B.B.*, 35, 183). Stanmore Common, one with a mixed party of tits, Tree-creepers and Lesser Redpolls on Apr. 6 (*R.W.H.*, see also *B.B.*, 35, 18).

S. Epsom Common, one on Dec. 25 (*C.B.A.*, see also *B.B.*, 35, 231). Mickleham, one on Juniper Hill on Feb. 15 was seen by H.B. and L.I.C., who were attracted by the difference of its call from a goldcrest's and later had a good view of the distinctive head markings.

**Chiffchaff.** *Phylloscopus c. collybita* (Vieill.).

S. Late date, Tadworth, Oct. 15 (H.B.).

**Wood-Warbler.** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* (Bechst.).

E. At least four pairs nesting in Epping Forest area (K.E.H.). Three pairs located in area round Warley Barracks (G.K.McC.).

H. Cuffley, heard in Well Wood, June 7 (*C.Q.P.*).

M. Present in Whitewebbs Park and Copse and Park Woods, Ruislip, in the breeding season.

S. Reigate, c. 12 pairs in South Park on May 10 (L.I.C.).

**Grasshopper-Warbler.** *Locustella n. naevia* (Bodd.).

H. Cuffley Great Wood, at least two pairs present in June (*E.R.P.*). Rickmansworth, one by Stockers Lake on June 28 (G.K.McC.).

M. Ruislip, present as usual in breeding season; on June 13 one trill lasted 74 seconds (*W.R.P.*).

S. Nested on Ashtead Common (*J.E.R.*) and Epsom Common (*S.E.B.R.*); also present near Leatherhead (*J.E.R.*) and on Bookham Common (*S.E.B.R.*).

**Reed-Warbler.** *Acrocephalus s. scirpaceus* (Herm.).

E. Bred at Chigwell and Sewardstone (K.E.H., W.A.W.).

H. Rickmansworth, 2-3 pairs by Stockers Lake on June 28 (G.K.McC.). Wormley, a nest, c/5, by R. Lea on June 12 (*A.G.R.*, *F.J.R.*).

**Sedge-Warbler.** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* (L.).

M. St James's Park, one on Apr. 29 (*W.R.P.*).

**Blackcap.** *Sylvia a. atricapilla* (L.).

M. Hampstead Heath, a pair probably nested by the Leg o' Mutton Pond (V.R.G.). Kensington Gardens, heard on May 27-29 (C.D., M.S.O.).

**Whitethroat.** *Sylvia c. communis* Lath.

M. Hampton Court, a nest, c/5, found on May 25, had a little canopy of dead leaves (J.E.R.). Regent's Park, a female on May 3 (R.S.R.F.). Late date, Ruislip, Sept. 28 (T.L.B.).

**Lesser Whitethroat.** *Sylvia c. curruca* (L.).

Breeding reported from Theobalds Estate, Cheshunt, Herts; Roxeth, Middlesex; Westerham Hill, Kent; and Mitcham Common, Surrey; and attempted breeding from Ruislip, Middlesex.

**Mistle-Thrush.** *Turdus v. viscivorus* L.

M. Brompton Road, a pair attempted to nest in a tree in Holy Trinity Churchyard in March (C.L.).

**British Song-Thrush.** *Turdus e. ericetorum* Turton.

E. Woodford Golf Course, a bird repeated the same phrase 11, 21, 22, 24 and 43 times in succession on June 11 (K.D.G.M.), and on July 6 one repeated a phrase 31 times at the same place (K.E.H.).

**Continental Song-Thrush.** *Turdus ericetorum philomelus* Brehm.

K. Sevenoaks district, a regular passage migrant and winter visitor (J. M. Harrison, "A Hand List of the Birds of the Sevenoaks or Western District of Kent," 1942, p. 58).

**Redwing.** *Turdus m. musicus* L.

M. South Harrow, at least 200 feeding on waste ground behind new shops in a partially built-up area on Feb. 23 (R.W.H.).

**Blackbird.** *Turdus m. merula* L.

E. One ringed at Woodford Green on 27.i.40 was recovered at Portpatrick, Wigtownshire, on 7.ii.41 (B.B., 35, 151).

M. Colindale, heard singing at times between Oct. 14 and Nov. 18 (F.J.F.B.); the song-chart in Vol. II of the *Handbook* shows no song at all for either of these months.

**Wheatear.** *Oenanthe oe. oenanthe* (L.).

Passage through the area lasted from March 8 (Beddington, C.B.A.) to May 8 (Woodford, K.D.G.M.) in spring, and from Sept. 2 (Wimbledon Common, J.A.W.) to Oct. 7 (Lonsdale Rd., W.R.P.) in the autumn.

S. Walton Heath, may have bred, as a pair frequented the same spot from Apr. 26 to June 15, and seven, taken to be a family party, were seen in exactly the same place on Aug. 24 (H.B.). Dulwich, one in Cleeve Hall grounds on Sept. 14 (L.R.E.).

**Greenland Wheatear.** *Oenanthe oe. leucorrhoa* (Gm.).

E. Sewardstone, a male on Apr. 30 (W.A.W.); identified by large size and bright colouring.

[M. Colindale, a male with markedly brown plumage, seen on a ploughed field, Apr. 29 to May 2, was probably of this subspecies (F.J.F.B.)]

**Whinchat.** *Saxicola rubetra* (L.).

- B. Iver, a pair by the canal on July 6 (A.V.T.).  
 E. Woodford Golf Course, two on May 5 (K.D.G.M.).  
 E./H.—Seen in two localities between Cheshunt and Roydon, an area “from which they had practically disappeared during the past 15 years”; bred at Cheshunt (G.K.McC.).  
 M. Reported in the breeding season from Boyers Pits, Harefield; Barn Hill, Wembley Park; and Ruislip. Ponders End S.F., 14-16 on Aug. 2 (K.E.H., W.A.W.). Early date, Newtons S.F., Ruislip, Mar. 23 (T.L.B.).  
 S. Reported from Beddington S.F. in the breeding season, from Wimbledon Common on spring passage and from Walton Heath and Walton-on-the-Hill on autumn passage.

**British Stonechat.** *Saxicola torquata hibernans* (Hart.).

- M. Brentford, a male seen near a tea-house on the Great West Road on Jan. 3-4 was eating crumbs on the second date, when there was snow and a cold wind (A.F.M.). Sudbury, a male in a small garden in a built-up area on Jan. 10 (J.S.C.).  
 S. Mitcham Common, apparently fewer than usual (W.W.T.).

**Redstart.** *Phoenicurus ph. phoenicurus* (L.).

- B. Langley Park, two on May 4 (C.A.W.).  
 E. Brentwood, recorded in May in Thorndon Park and in woods between the park and Warley Barracks (G.K.McC.). Epping Forest, recorded as usual during the breeding season; on June 15 K.E.H. listened to a bird giving mimicking songs for 2½ hours; each phrase began with the normal song, but ended with one and sometimes two imitations, which included the songs of the Starling, Tree-Pipit, Blue Tit, Coal-Tit, Chiffchaff, Willow-Warbler, Garden-Warbler, Blackcap, Whitethroat, Song-Thrush, Blackbird, Robin, Wren, Nightingale and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, the calls of the Tree-Sparrow, Sky-Lark and Swift, and the “dwee” note of the Greenfinch.  
 H. Cuffley Great Wood, at least six pairs bred; two nested on the ground among bracken, three in natural holes in trees and one in an old woodpecker’s hole; last seen in the area on Aug. 24 (E.D.P., E.R.P.).  
 M. Enfield, a pair in Enfield Chase on Apr. 27 (A.G.R., F.J.R.), and two in Hillyfields Park on Aug. 27 (E.D.P.). Hampstead Heath, a male displaying to a female on the East Heath on May 10 (R.S.R.F.). Stanmore Common, a pair on Apr. 21 (E.R.P.).

**Black Redstart.** *Phoenicurus ochrurus gibraltariensis* (Gm.).

- E. Chingford, at least two, one an adult male, on the water tower of the new reservoir on Sept. 27 (K.E.H., W.A.W.).

M. For the second successive year a pair reared two broods in the precincts of Westminster Abbey, and at least three other singing males were present in Inner London. At Westminster the male bird was first seen on Mar. 14 and the female in mid-April, while the presence of a second male was definitely established on May 31; the first nest was located in the cowl of a stove-pipe about 50 ft. above the ground on June 17, and the two young flew by June 20; by July 4 the hen was sitting on her second clutch which was apparently laid in the same nest that was used for the second brood in 1940; these three young left the nest between July 29 and Aug. 1, and often seen during August; the old birds remained until Oct. 10 (A.L.N.R., G.C.L., R.W.H., C.A.W., C.B.A., W.W.T., R.S.R.F.); (cf. an account of the behaviour of these birds by C.B.A. in *B.B.*, 35, 201.) Two other singing males were reported, one from the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, from Apr. 15 to June 11 and the other from the ruined area round St Paul's Cathedral between June 17 and July 23. (For full details, see R.S.R.F. in *B.B.*, 35, 206.) Two addenda to the note on Black Redstarts in Inner London in 1940 (*L.B.R.*, 1940, p. 8) have also come to hand: A.L.N.R. is now fairly certain in identifying as a Black Redstart's a song he heard on St Paul's Cathedral in the early summer of 1940; and C.S.B. reports that he saw a female as well as a male in the Trafalgar Square area in that year.

**Continental Robin.** *Erithacus r. rubecula* (L.).

K. Among the unusual numbers of Robins in the Sevenoaks district in the winter of 1940-41, a number referable to this subspecies were detected (J. M. Harrison, "A Hand List of the Birds of the Sevenoaks or Western District of Kent," 1942, p. 67.)

**Nightingale.** *Luscinia m. megarhyncha* Brehm.

M. Hampton Court Gardens, one sang throughout the season, the first recorded for this locality for many years (J.E.R.).

**House-Martin.** *Delichon u. urbica* (L.).

M. Eastcote, two observed on May 18 ejecting House Sparrows from their nest on Sainsbury's shop (T.L.B.).

**Sand-Martin.** *Riparia r. riparia* (L.).

H. Moor Park, a colony of 20-30 nested in a sand-pit at the Batchworth Heath end of the park regularly till 1935 and probably later (M.G.R.). Wormley, nested (A.G.R., F.J.R.).

M. Regent's Park, 20 on May 15, a few staying to May 20 (E.C.W.).

**Nightjar.** *Caprimulgus e. europaeus* L.

E. Epping Forest, present in breeding season (K.E.H.).

H. Cuffley Great Wood, a male flushed on May 24 (E.R.P.).

K. Westerham district, local but nests on Brasted Chart and in Chevening Park (P.A.A.).

M. Ruislip, present as usual in summer (W.R.P., C.A.W.).

S. Late date, Tadworth, Sept. 3 (H.B.).

**Hoopoe.** *Upupa e. epops* L.

M. Enfield, one in June. (See separate note, p. 20).

**Kingfisher.** *Alcedo atthis ispida* L.

E. Great Parndon, nested at Todsbrook, but numbers fewer owing to severe winter (G.D.). Present in breeding season in Roding Valley, at Navestock Lake and Sewardstone Gravel Pit (K.E.H.).

H. Watford, three pairs nested in Cassiobury Park (J.A.S.). Chess-hunt, nested (G.D.).

M. Bushy Park, two pairs nested as usual (J.E.R.). Regent's Park, one on the canal on June 17 (A.B.H.) and one on Dec. 12 (E.C.W.). Present in Whitewebbs Park in the breeding season (E.D.P.).

S. Surbiton, one pair resident on Hogsmill River (J.E.R.). Present at Stangrave Pond, Godstone, in breeding season.

**British Great Spotted Woodpecker.** *Dryobates major anglicus* (Hart.).

M. Brent Park, one heard on June 13 uttered two notes similar to that of the Green Woodpecker (E.C.O.). Kensington Gardens, a pair present from Feb. to May 22 left without nesting (G.C.L.); one on Sept. 21 (S.W.).

**British Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.** *Dryobates minor comminutus* (Hart.).

M. Inner London, one calling in Campden Hill on Feb. 15, one drumming in the top of a wych elm in Kensington Gardens on May 2 (M.S.O.) and one in Hyde Park on Oct. 1 (C.H.). Hampstead, one being followed by a Jay twice attacked the Jay and drove it down towards the ground, Nov. 15 (V.R.G.).

**Wryneck.** *Jynx t. torquilla* L.

K. Recorded from Westerham (S.E.B.R.).

S. Limpsfield, nested in a garden (B.E.B.). Tadworth, three pairs throughout breeding season (H.B.). Bookham Common, heard on May 19 (H.B., L.I.C.).

**Cuckoo.** *Cuculus canorus canorus* L.

M. Kensington Gardens, a young bird on Sept. 7 (G.C.L.). One was fostered by a pair of Blackbirds in a Hampstead garden in 1940 (E. Sharp, *Manchester Guardian*, 27.vi.42).

**Peregrine Falcon.** *Falco p. peregrinus* Tunst.

M. Westminster, one, probably a tiercel, flying high and upstream (R.S.R.F., J.E.R.).

**Kestrel.** *Falco t. tinnunculus* L.

K. Beckenham Place Park, two catching flying ants, summer 1940 (H.H.).

M. Nested in the West Tower of the Imperial Institute, South Kensington (G.C.L.). On Mar. 28 one flew into Kensington Gardens, stooped to the edge of the Round Pond, picked up a House-Sparrow and flew off with it (G.C.L.).

**Common Buzzard.** *Buteo b. buteo* (L.).

[S. Mitcham Common, one circling over on June 19 and one on Oct. 16 were probably referable to this species (G.W.L.)]

**Hen Harrier.** *Circus cyaneus cyaneus* (L.).

[S. Mitcham Common, a female or immature Harrier being mobbed by five crows on Nov. 9, 1940, probably belonged to this species (G.W.L.); eight days later a female Hen Harrier was seen on Staines Moor (*L.B.R.*, 1940, p. 9).]

**Sparrow-Hawk.** *Accipiter n. nisus* (L.).

E. Epping Forest, one seen to take a Willow-Warbler, which was building a nest, May 5 (K.D.G.M.).

M. Hampstead, one over West Heath on May 10 (R.S.R.F.) and one being mobbed in Ken Wood by Carrion-Crows, Jays and a Magpie on Nov. 15 (V.R.G.).

**Common Heron.** *Ardea c. cinerea* L.

E. There were 49 occupied nests at Walthamstow Res. (R.S.R.F., W.A.W.) and 6 at Wanstead Park (W.H.F.), increases of three and one respectively on 1940.

K. Brasted, a single pair nested in tall trees on a tiny island in a small natural lake (*S.E.B.R.*).

S. There were 2 occupied nests at Gatton Park (G.W.P.), 8 at Burwood Park, Hersham (W.B.A.), and 56 at Richmond Park (D.A.R.), compared with 2, 7 and 55 respectively in 1940.

There was thus an overall increase of seven pairs in the Heron breeding population of the London area in 1941.

**Whooper Swan.** *Cygnus cygnus* (L.).

E. Epping Forest, four birds, two being distinctly smaller than the others, watched on Connaught Water at 25 yards range for 25 mins. at 8 a.m. on Jan. 26; diagnostic shape of yellow on bill clearly seen on all four birds, "whooping" note heard and erect neck and body low in water noted; when the birds grew nervous the neck was slowly relaxed until it became S-shaped; it was then suddenly straightened, causing the head to be jerked up; this was repeated several times before they flew off towards King George Res. (K.E.H.).

**Grey Geese.** *Anser* sp. ?

M. Holloway, 15 flying S.W. on Feb. 13 (P.T.).

**Pink-footed Goose.** *Anser fabalis brachyrhynchus* Baillon.

E. Great Parndon, two skeins, comprising c. 100 birds in all, flying N.E. on Mar. 15 (G.D.).

**Sheld-Duck.** *Tadorna tadorna* (L.).

M./S. One frequented the R. Thames at Hammersmith and the adjacent Lonsdale Rd. Res. from Nov. 3 to Dec. 22 (T.B. and others).

**Gadwall.** *Anas strepera* L.

- M. Brent Park, a duck on the lake, Oct. 1-15 (E.C.O.). Kensington Gardens, one in eclipse on the Round Pond on July 14 (G.C.L.).
- M./S. R. Thames, by Chiswick Eyot, max. 32 (including two on Lonsdale Rd. Res.) on Oct. 20 (T.B.); max. in first half of year was 14 on Mar. 29 (G.C.L.); this suggests that several pairs bred again in Barn Elms and reared at least 18 young. R. Thames, a pair at Westminster on June 29 (W.R.P.).
- S. Beddington Lane Ponds, a pair on May 17 (H.B., L.I.C.); possibly nested (C.B.A.).

**Teal.** *Anas c. crecca* L.

- E. Sewardstone Gravel Pit, an adult drake on June 14; Abridge Gravel Pit, a duck on July 19 (K.E.H.).
- M. Ruislip Res., recorded on several dates in autumn and winter (max. c. 70 on Jan. 2, R.S.R.F.), and 2-3 pairs present in May, but not seen between May 28 and Oct. 25 (T.L.B.).
- M./S. R. Thames, max. 21 by Chiswick Eyot on Dec. 11 (T.B.).

**Wigeon.** *Anas penelope* L.

- E. Sewardstone Gravel Pit, up to 5 from Oct. 11 to Nov. 8 (K.E.H., W.A.W.).
- H. Colney St., up to 12 from Nov. 23 to end of year on Moor Mill Pond (I.B.S.).
- M. Brent Res., three on Feb. 8 (R.S.R.F.).
- M./S. R. Thames, 20 flying over at Bermondsey on Sept. 24 (J.F.).

**Pintail.** *Anas acuta acuta* L.

- M. [Kensington Gardens, a very tame drake seen on the Round Pond on Apr. 20 and on the Long Water on June 6, June 26, and Sept. 6 was doubtless an escape (G.C.L.).] A drake that stayed in Regent's Park from May 25-30 was possibly the same bird (E.C.W.). Ruislip, a drake that appeared in late March was joined by a duck from Apr. 27 to May 28 and was last seen on June 11 (T.L.B.).
- S. Lonsdale Rd. Res., a drake on Dec. 11 (T.B.).

**Shoveler.** *Spatula clypeata* (L.).

- M. Staines Moor, a pair on Apr. 22 (C.A.W.).

**Common Pochard.** *Aythya ferina* (L.).

- M. Osterley Park, nested (C.A.W.); this is the fourth definite breeding record for this locality where the bird has probably bred every year since 1932, and the fifth for the county (Cf. *B.B.*, 35, 85, 109). St James's Park, an adult with six ducklings on June 27 (W.R.P.).

**Tufted Duck.** *Aythya fuligula* (L.).

- E. Bred at Connaught Water (W.A.W.) and Sewardstone Gravel Pit (K.E.H.).
- H. Rickmansworth, bred on Stockers Lake (G.K.McC.).
- M. Hampton Court, bred on the canal (A.F.M.).



S. Beddington S.F., one pair bred (C.B.A.). Godstone, one pair bred on Town Pond (L.I.C.). Kew Gardens, at least three pairs bred (A.F.M.).

**Scaup-Duck.** *Aythya m. marila* (L.).

M. Osterley Park, a drake on Apr. 28 and June 2 appeared genuinely wild; it was constantly diving and kept away from other waterfowl (C.A.W.). Ruislip Res., a duck on Mar. 30 and Apr. 5 (T.L.B.).

M./S. An almost mature drake, apparently injured, stayed on the R. Thames by Waterloo Bridge from Jan. 29 to Mar. 10 (K.E.H.). (This may have been the bird later seen at Osterley, since its injury would probably prevent it responding to the migratory urge.)

S. Lonsdale Rd. Res., a duck on Feb. 13 (G.C.L.) and Dec. 4 (T.B., W.R.P.).

**Goldeneye.** *Bucephala c. clangula* (L.).

E. Sewardstone Gravel Pit, an immature drake on Nov. 1 (K.E.H., W.A.W.).

**Goosander.** *Mergus merganser merganser* L.

E. Walthamstow Res., one on Jan. 11 and Feb. 8 (W.A.W.).

M./S. One seen on Lonsdale Rd. Res. on Jan. 4 was seen on the river nearby on Jan. 5 and 19 (P.T.). R. Thames opposite Kew Gardens, up to five seen from Feb. 13 to Mar. 31 (G.C.L., A.F.H.) and one on Dec. 16 (E.G.P.) and Dec. 21 (E.M.W.).

**Smew.** *Mergus albellus* L.

E. Walthamstow Res., 7-8 on Feb. 22; 20, including seven adult drakes, on Mar. 1 (K.E.H., W.A.W.).

M. Brent Res., three, including one adult drake, on Feb. 8, and at least four, including one adult drake, on Dec. 27 (R.S.R.F.).

M./S. Noted on Lonsdale Rd. Res. and the Thames nearby in Jan. and Dec., with maxima of 10 on Jan. 19 (P.T.) and four on Dec. 28 (G.C.L.). One by Kew Bridge on Jan. 20 (A.F.M.).

**Cormorant.** *Phalacrocorax c. carbo* (L.).

E. Walthamstow Res., two on Feb. 8 (W.A.W.). Woodford Green, two, including one in full breeding plumage, flying towards King George Res. at 7.30 a.m. on May 4 (K.E.H.).

M./S. R. Thames, one between Chiswick Eyot and Putney on several dates from Jan. 18 to Feb. 8 (C.A.W., P.T.); one near Chiswick Bridge on June 15 (A.F.M.).

**Shag.** *Phalacrocorax a. aristotelis* (L.).

M./S. R. Thames, two between Mortlake and Chiswick on several dates from Feb. 13 to May 10 (C.D., G.C.L., E.G.P., J.R.W.).

**Gannet.** *Sula bassana* (L.).

E. Epping Forest, one was seen by W.A.W. on Wake Valley Pond on the morning of June 3, but had gone by the evening; observer was informed that it had been captured in the Forest on May 29 and taken home, but as it refused food was released on the Pond on May 30 or 31.

M./S. R. Thames, one was seen near Waterloo Bridge by K.E.H. on Jan. 28; observer describes it as being in adult plumage except for a few black spots on the scapulars, bill silver-blue, head and neck slightly cream-coloured and rest of plumage white except for black wing-tips; it was being slightly worried by Black-headed Gulls. In this connection it should be recorded that in *The Times* of 3.iv.40 Mr C. W. J. Tennant reported having seen a Gannet over the Thames near Temple Station on 27.iii.40. At this time one of the Pelicans in St James's Park had grown its flight feathers and was taking flights around the Park, and it was thought Mr Tennant might have confused this with a Gannet, though he claimed that the set of its head and its flight were typical of the latter species. It is therefore extremely interesting that in the following year a Gannet should have been seen at almost the same spot on the river.

**Great Crested Grebe.** *Podiceps c. cristatus* (L.).

- B. Colnbrook, three pairs bred (S.C.).  
 E. Sewardstone Gravel Pit, at least four pairs bred (K.E.H., W.A.W.).  
 H. Rickmansworth, two pairs bred on Stockers Lake (G.K.McC.).  
 M. Single pairs bred at Bushy Park (first for ten years, J.E.R.), Gunnersbury Park (A.F.M.), Ponders End S.F. (new locality, W.A.W.), Ruislip Res. (T.L.B., G.K.McC.) and near Yeoveney (C.A.W.).  
 S. Bred at Gatton Park (three pairs, G.W.P.), Godstone, Town Pond (one pair, H.B., L.I.C., B.E.B.), Lonsdale Rd. Res. (one pair, G.C.L.), and Wimbledon Park Lake (one pair, C.D.). Ham Gravel Pits, 17 on June 16 (A.F.M.).

**Red-necked Grebe.** *Podiceps g. griseigena* (Bodd.).

M./S. One on R. Thames near Chiswick Eyot on Jan. 18 (C.A.W.).

**Little Grebe.** *Podiceps r. ruficollis* (Pall.).

- S. Fetcham, male parent observed towing two 2-3-day-old chicks, each gripping the feathers on one side of the parent's body, Sept. 5 (H.J.B.).

**Black-throated Diver.** *Colymbus a. arcticus* L.

M./S. One on R. Thames opposite Isleworth Eyot on Nov. 30 (G.C.L.).

**Red-throated Diver.** *Colymbus stellatus* Pontopp.

- M. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, one on the Round Pond from Jan. 27 to Feb. 1 and on the Serpentine on Feb. 1-2 (G.C.L., E.G.P.; see also *B.B.*, 34, 246).

**Stock-Dove.** *Columba oenas* L.

- M. Kensington Gardens, several pairs resident and breeding (G.C.L.).  
 S. Flocks of 126 at Tandridge on Mar. 29 and of c. 50 on Nov. 8 and c. 100 on Dec. 27 at Lower Kingswood (H.B., L.I.C.).

**Common Curlew.** *Numenius a. arquata* (L.).

- E. Sewardstone, two on Nov. 29 (W.A.W.).  
 M. Kensington Gardens, one flying round Round Pond calling on Nov. 8 during overhead fog (G.C.L.).

S. Beddington S.F., two on Nov. 14 (L.I.C., A.C.G.P.). Birds were seen or heard flying over the area in Mar., Apr., May, June and Sept.

**Whimbrel.** *Numenius ph. phaeopus* (L.).

E. Woodford Golf Course, six calling as they flew S.W. on July 27 (K.D.G.M.).

M. Heard over North Wembley on Aug. 10 (R.H.M.R.).

**Woodcock.** *Scolopax rusticola* L.

E. East Brentwood, a very tame bird on a cricket-field on May 8 (R.Ph.D.).

H. Cuffley Great Wood, one on Nov. 23 (E.R.P.).

M. Bushy and Hampton Court Parks, wintered again; last seen on Mar. 27 (J.E.R.). Stanmore Common, one on Apr. 6 (R.W.H.) and Dec. 7 (R.S.R.F., E.R.P.). Trent Park, one on Apr. 10 (A.G.R., F.J.R.). Whitewebbs Park, one on July 14 (H.G.A.).

S. Wimbledon, one on Mar. 13 (J.A.W.).

**Common Snipe.** *Capella g. gallinago* (L.).

E./H. Bred at Broxbourne and Wormley in the Lea Valley (G.D., A.G.R., F.J.R.); and at Great Parndon, but numbers decreasing owing to drainage (G.D.).

**Jack Snipe.** *Lymnocyptes minimus* Brünn.

E. Loughton S.F., two on Feb. 9 and Mar. 8 (K.E.H.). Sewardstone Gravel Pit, one on Mar. 1 (K.E.H.).

M. Ruislip Res., one on Mar. 16 (R.W.H.).

**Dunlin.** *Calidris alpina* (L.) ? subsp.

M. Staines Res., one on Apr. 13 (E.G.P.).

**Common Sandpiper.** *Actitis hypoleucos* (L.).

Passage through the area lasted from April 13 to May 17 in spring and from July 6 to Sept. 24 in autumn.

**Green Sandpiper.** *Tringa ochropus* L.

E. Loughton, one by R. Roding on Sept. 28 (K.E.H.). Walthamstow Res., one on Apr. 26 (R.S.R.F., W.A.W.).

H. Watford, two at cress-beds during cold weather, Jan. 16-19 and Feb. 4 (J.A.S.).

M. Harefieldmoor Wharf, one on Nov. 24 (T.B.). Staines Res., one on Apr. 13 (E.G.P.).

**British Redshank.** *Tringa totanus britannica* Math.

E. Not seen after early April in the Lea and Stort Valleys near Roydon; it seems likely that the species will not breed again in this area, owing to the operations of the Catchment Board (G.D.).

M. The usual breeding place between Northwood and Harefield has been drained and no nest was found (G.K.McC.).

S. The breeding place at Fetcham is stated to be on Leatherhead S.F., not the cress-beds (H.J.B., cf. *L.B.R.*, 1939, p. 29).

**Golden Plover.** *Pluvialis apricaria* (L.).

- E. Of a flock of more than 100 on arable land N.E. of Waltham Abbey on Apr. 6 at least ten were identified as of the Northern subspecies (*P. a. altifrons* (Brehm)), having the black of the belly extending up the breast and throat to the face (R.S.R.F.); a flock of c. 150 and several smaller flocks were seen in the same area on Apr. 12 (E.R.P.). Chigwell, c. 40 with a flock of 300 Lapwings on Dec. 27 (K.E.H.). Sewardstone, 18 on Feb. 12 and 10 on Nov. 29 (W.A.W.).
- H. Radlett, four at Old Parkbury on Mar. 4 (M.S.F.).
- M. Southall, one flying W. on Feb. 8 (C.A.W.). Staines Moor, two with Lapwings on Mar. 9 and one on Mar. 16 (C.A.W.).
- S. Beddington S.F., seven on Jan. 19 (C.B.A.).

**British Oyster-Catcher** *Haematopus ostralegus occidentalis* Neum.

- E. One seen and heard flying over Sewardstone on Aug. 2 (W.A.W.).

**Stone-Curlew.** *Burhinus oe. oediconemus* (L.).

- E. Chingford Plain, one on Apr. 23 (W.A.W.).

**Common Tern.** *Sterna h. hirundo* L.

- M. Ruislip Res., one on Oct. 10 (T.L.B.). Kensington Gardens, one over the Round Pond on Sept. 20 (G.C.L.) was possibly the same tern as was seen, but not definitely identified, in St James's Park by W.R.P. on the same day.

**Black-headed Gull.** *Larus r. ridibundus* L.

- M. Three adults ringed at Littleton on 8.2.35, 25.11.35 and 13.2.36 were recovered respectively at Holt, Norfolk, in April 1941, at Paldiski, Estonia, on 2.9.40, and at Littleton on 23.3.41 (*B.B.*, 35, 177).
- M./S. Two adults ringed on the Thames in London in the winter of 1939-40 were recovered in Sweden in May 1941 (*B.B.*, 35, 177). Two large flocks were hawking for flying ants over the river at Chiswick on Sept. 2 (G.C.L.).

**Common Gull.** *Larus c. canus* L.

- M./S. One ringed at Littleton on 13.2.37 was recovered at Malden on 10.2.41 (*B.B.*, 35, 177).

**Scandinavian Lesser Black-backed Gull.** *Larus f. fuscus* L.

- M./S. R. Thames, between Hammersmith and Barnes Bridge, two on Jan. 18 (C.A.W.), two on June 30 (G.C.L.), four on Sept. 15 (G.C.L.), one on Dec. 22 and two on Dec. 28 (W.R.P.).
- S. Lonsdale Rd. Res., two on Oct. 21 (G.C.L.).

**Great Black-backed Gull.** *Larus marinus* L.

- M. One ringed at Littleton on 4.2.35 was recovered at Gravesend, Kent, in Nov. 1940 (*B.B.*, 35, 177). Bushy Park, one on Feb. 24 was the first for ten years (J.E.R.).

**Glaucous Gull.** *Larus hyperboreus* Gunn.

- M. Kensington Gardens, one on the Round Pond on Dec. 25 (C.H., *B.B.*, 35, 260); this was the second record for Inner London.

**Iceland Gull.** *Larus glaucooides* Meyer.

M./S. An immature bird seen at Lonsdale Rd. Res. on Dec. 15 (T.B., W.R.P.) was apparently different from the one seen on the river by Hammersmith Bridge on Dec. 26 and subsequently in 1942 by R.H.M.R. and others (See *B.B.*, 35, 207, 278; the question of how many Iceland Gulls there were in the London area in the winter of 1941-42 will be discussed fully in the *L.B.R.* for 1942, as they were seen mostly in the latter year); the Iceland Gull had previously been recorded only once in Surrey (at Barn Elms in 1939) and once definitely in Middlesex (at Staines in 1939-40).

**Kittiwake.** *Rissa t. tridactyla* (L.).

M./S. R. Thames, one on an obstruction in the river opposite County Hall on Apr. 23 (T.L.B., see also *B.B.*, 35, 260).  
S. Ham Gravel Pits, two adults stayed all day on June 15 (E.G.P., see also *B.B.*, 35, 62).

**Corn-Crake.** *Urex crex* (L.).

K. Westerham, one watched taking food to young on June 17 (P.A.A.).

**Water-Rail.** *Rallus a. aquaticus* L.

E. One found freshly killed at the marshy west end of Tilbury Dock at the end of Oct. (J.F.).  
S. Beddington Farm Pond, one on Jan. 19 (C.B.A.). Fetcham Pond, one on Jan. 12 (C.B.A.) and Feb. 15 (H.B., L.I.C.). Godstone, one at Ivy Mill Pond on Jan. 4 and Mar. 29 and one at Leigh Mill on Jan. 4 (H.B., L.I.C., A.C.G.P.).

**Red-legged Partridge.** *Alectoris r. rufa* (L.).

E. Pairs seen at Chigwell and Waltham Abbey several times in the breeding season; also seen at Abridge on May 17 and Sewardstone on Apr. 30; a covey of nine at Chigwell on Oct. 19 (K.E.H., W.A.W.).  
S. Headley Heath, a pair on Mar. 8 (H.B., A.C.G.P.).

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### On Sending in Records.

The records printed in these specific notes are only a small proportion, the most significant, of the total volume of notes on bird life in the London area received by the Records Committee and entered on the record sheets. It would greatly help those who do this tedious task if observers would send in their notes with the birds listed in the order of Witherby's "Handbook," and *not* alphabetically or chronologically; also with records for north and south of the Thames on different sheets. Please do not imagine that notes are only wanted on the species mentioned in the *London Bird Report*; notes on all species, however common, are welcome. The Recorder would like to develop the publication of separate short notes of 150-400 words on behaviour and other interesting observations, and hopes that Members will send in suitable material.  
—R. S. R. F.

## A Hoopoe at Enfield.

ON June 8, 1941, at 10.20 a.m., we entered Whitewebbs Park, Enfield, at the entrance opposite Sloman's Farm and immediately heard a low resonant "Hoo-Hoo-Hoo" which puzzled us. The call was frequently repeated and the bird making it appeared to be moving about. We walked in the direction of the call and got a clear view of a Hoopoe (*Upupa e. epops* L.) through binoculars at about 60 yards range. It was on the ground in a clearing covered with dead bracken and we at once noted the orange-brown plumage with striking black and white barred back, crest which was not erected, and long curved bill. We had it in view for about one minute and it then flew a little further away and called again. It seemed very restless and moved about a good deal. It did not appear to call in flight but was constantly calling when settled. We next had a view of it from about 25 yards, perched high in a fir tree; it then flew off and we did not see it again, although we heard it calling until 10.50, when it finally disappeared in the direction of Bulls Cross.

Between June 8 and 22 we visited the Park three times, but did not see the Hoopoe again, although we heard it calling for a few minutes at 10.30 a.m. on June 15, and Mr and Mrs R. S. R. Fitter also heard it on June 16. On June 22 we again heard it calling at 10.40 a.m. and had a short view of it moving from one tree to another. It again seemed very fugitive and although we spent until 6 p.m. looking for it and heard it calling for brief spells eight times during the day, we failed to track it down. The times we heard it were as follows:—10.40-10.45, 11.40-11.45, 12.0-12.15, 12.20-12.21, 12.35-12.40, 2.0-2.5, 2.25, 4.40.

We visited the Park on seven further occasions during June and July but did not see or hear the bird again. It is probable that by early July, if it still remained in the area, it had ceased calling as this is the end of its song-period in southern Europe. This particular bird appears to have been unusually shy, and although there are a number of suitable private lawns in the neighbourhood on which one would have expected it to feed, it was never seen on them. The Gardener at "Wildwood," a large house next to the Park, the Park-keeper, and the Gamekeeper of the adjoining estate of Myddelton House, all stated independently that they had heard it calling since the first week in May. They said that it called "all day long" when it first arrived and was much more vociferous in May and early June than later. None of them had seen it, though the Gamekeeper had tried to track it down.

We have been able to trace only six previous records of the Hoopoe in the London area since 1900, and it is interesting to note that four of these occurred within five miles of Whitewebbs Park, viz.: Southgate, May 1906; Enfield Chase, summer 1910; Outer London, April 1934; and Totteridge, August 1936.

In addition, two Hoopoes were reported by Mr R. Gerard in *Cage Birds* as having been seen by him near Ware in the Spring of 1941.

E. D. and E. R. PARRINDER.

# Bird Ringing, 1941.

By R. W. HALE.

OWING to war-time conditions the Society's returns to the Bird Ringing Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology show a further decrease. 274 birds of 41 species were ringed, as compared with 593 birds of 38 species in 1940. The following table analyses the results of the 13 ringers who took part:—

Name of Ringer.	Nestlings.	Trapped.	Total.
P. A. Adolph .....	10	5	15
T. L. Bartlett .....	6	—	6
F. W. Blake .....	42	—	42
S. Boardman .....	51	12	63
R. S. R. Fitter .....	22	30	52
R. W. Hale .....	2	—	2
R. C. Homes .....	5	—	5
K. Hoy .....	19	—	19
R. Mayo .....	19	—	19
E. R. Parrinder .....	19	—	19
J. E. Roberts .....	11	—	11
C. A. White .....	1	13	14
J. A. Wigzell .....	—	7	7
Total, 1941 .....	207	67	274
Total, 1940 .....	166	427	593

The most numerous species ringed were: Manx Shearwater 24, Carrion Crow 23, Redstart 19, Willow Warbler 18, Buzzard 17. A rare species appearing in our list for the first time was the Black Redstart, the three young of the second brood reared during the summer at Westminster Abbey being ringed by members.

We welcome three new ringers, Messrs P. A. Adolph, T. L. Bartlett, and K. E. Hoy.

Rings may still be obtained at a cost of 1s per packet of 20 (each packet containing one size only) from the Bird Ringing Secretary, R. W. Hale, 6 Grendon Gardens, Wembley Park, Middsx., who will be glad to hear from any member interested.

## RECOVERY OF RINGED BIRD.

The following recovery of a bird ringed by a member of the Society has been published in *British Birds* since the last report:—Sandwich Tern (*Sterna s. sandvicensis*). AP5690. Ringed 20.7.37 at Scolt Head (Norfolk) by S. Boardman and recovered 6.5.40 at Dakar (Senegal).

Birds ringed or recovered within the Society's area are listed in the specific notes under Greenfinch, Blackbird, Black-headed, Common and Great Black-backed Gulls.





Supplement to The London Naturalist.

# LONDON BIRD REPORT

FOR  
1942



An Annual Report on Bird-Life within Twenty Miles of  
St Paul's Cathedral.

EDITED BY

R. S. R. FITTER, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.,

AND

E. R. PARRINDER, M.B.O.U.

Price, 1s 6d.

PUBLISHED BY THE

LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,  
THE LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE & TROPICAL MEDICINE,  
KEPPEL STREET, GOWER STREET, LONDON, W.C.1.

DATE OF PUBLICATION, SEPTEMBER 1943.

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## A HANDLIST OF THE BIRDS OF THE SEVENOAKS OR WESTERN DISTRICT OF KENT

BY

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## The London Bird Report, 1942.

IN its seventh issue as a separate publication, the *London Bird Report* deals with the third full year of reduced war-time observations, but the Editors are glad to be able to report a large increase in the number of observers sending in records. This is mainly due to the interest aroused by the remarkable numbers of Black Redstarts in London, three pairs having bred during 1942, while at least four other pairs and 16 other singing males were reported. Among other noteworthy occurrences were two Mealy Redpolls at Ruislip, a small flock of Crossbills at Tadworth, the nesting of the Cirl-Bunting at Chipstead, Waxwings at Cheam and Kensington, Firecrests at Epsom and Westerham, a Red-spotted Bluethroat at Elstree, a Hobby over Elmstead Woods, a Brent Goose at Beddington Lane, a Red-breasted Merganser on the Thames, a Knot and a Grey Plover on the foreshore near Chiswick Eyot, an Oystercatcher in Wimbledon Park, a Black Tern at Lonsdale Road Res., two Corncrakes at Westerham and a Quail at Great Parndon.

In view of the great interest aroused by the presence of the Glaucous and Iceland Gulls at Hammersmith, an attempt has been made to estimate the amount of watching put in on that much watched stretch of towpath during the three months, January-March 1942, when the birds were there. In that period 17 different observers are known to have paid some 110 visits to the towpath, and at least one observer was there on 61 out of the 90 days in the quarter. In January there were only six days when no watcher is known to have visited the towpath at Hammersmith, and in March only eleven days. On 31 days there was more than one watcher present, the peak being on Jan. 25 with six. There was no special concentration of observers at week-ends; in fact, nobody seems to have gone there on five out of the 13 Sundays in the period.

All the records in the specific notes that follow are for 1942, except where otherwise indicated. The initials following each record show the observer(s) responsible for it; where the name is given in full, the reference is to Dr G. C. Low's *Birds of Inner London* (*B.B.*, 36, 189). The six counties which come within the Society's area of a 20-mile radius of St Paul's Cathedral are indicated by their initials, viz.: B.=Bucks; E.=Essex; H.=Herts; K.=Kent; M.=Middlesex; S.=Surrey. The following abbreviations are also used in the Report: *B.B.*=*British Birds* magazine; *Handbook*=*The Handbook of British Birds* (1938-41); *L.B.R.*=*London Bird Report*; *Res.*=*Reservoir*; *S.E.B.R.*=*South-Eastern Bird Report*; *S.F.*=*Sewage Farm*.

The Recorders wish to express their thanks to the following 149 observers who have sent in records or supplied information during the year, and their special thanks to Mrs E. D. Parrinder for help with entering the records up on the sheets and the preparation of the Report.

(x)=per R.S.R.F.

- P. A. Adolph.  
 H. G. Alexander.  
 W. B. Alexander.  
 Lord Amulree.  
 Rosa Anderson (x).  
 C. B. Ashby.  
 S. Austin.  
 N. C. Ballingal.  
 Miss H. Barlow (H.Ba.) (x).  
 F. J. F. Barrington (x).  
 T. L. Bartlett.  
 C. S. Bayne.  
 J. F. Adams Bede (x).  
 J. S. S. Beesley.  
 Howard Bentham.  
 T. Bispham.  
 D. J. Boatman  
     (per K.E.H.).  
 B. C. L. Boyd.  
 Dr W. Russell Brain (x).  
 P. A. Briggs  
     (per G.C.L.).  
 F. C. Bromley.  
 Miss B. E. Brown.  
 H. J. Burkill.  
 G. W. Calvert (per S.A.).  
 L. I. Carrington.  
 H. D. Carroll (x).  
 J. S. Carter.  
 C. P. Castell.  
 S. P. W. Chave.  
 Brig. H. H. V. Christie  
     (per H.F.W.).  
 P. Coles (per J.A.S.).  
 F. C. Cook (per E.W.P.).  
 S. Cramp (S.Cp.).  
 S. Croft (x) (S.Ct.).  
 Miss M. Curtis (x).  
 R. Phillips Dales (x).  
     (R.Ph.D.).  
 G. Dent (x).  
 Capt. C. Diver (C.Di.).  
 C. Dolley (C.Do.).  
 R. Preston Donaldson  
     (R.Pr.D.).  
 H. Donisthorpe (x).  
 L. J. Dosseter.  
 Miss K. Douglas-Smith.  
 L. Duke (per I.A.W.).  
 E. J. R. Edenborough  
     (per C.Di.).  
 L. R. Evans.  
 W. H. Feakes (x).  
 James Fisher.  
 Mrs M. S. Fitter.  
 R. S. R. Fitter.
- P. Gargrave (per J.A.S.).  
 V. R. Garrett.  
 H. Gaster.  
 D. W. Gillingham.  
 Miss V. Goodwin  
     (per H.F.W.).  
 H. G. Gould.  
 I. E. Green, the late.  
 Sir Louis Grigg  
     (per D.A.R.).  
 J. Gunn (per V.R.G.).  
 R. W. Hale.  
 P. J. Hanson.  
 Miss P. Harvey  
     (per E.D.P.).  
 D. A. Hawgood  
     (per R.Pr.D.).  
 H. H. S. Hayward.  
 Mrs H. Highway.  
 R. C. Homes.  
 A. B. Hornblower.  
 K. E. Hoy.  
 Sir Cyril Hurcomb.  
 B. H. Hurd (x).  
 Dr J. S. Huxley.  
 Mrs D. J. Jenkins  
     (per H.J.B.).  
 W. P. Jobson (x).  
 Miss L. J. Johns.  
 B. F. Karthausier.  
 N. B. Kinnear  
     (per G.C.L.).  
 Capt. C. W. R. Knight.  
 L. Koch (per J.S.H.).  
 C. Lacey (per A.B.H.).  
 Miss E. P. Leach.  
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 Dr G. Carmichael Low.  
 G. K. McCulloch.  
 J. D. Magee (per J.A.S.).  
 F. R. Mann.  
 Sir P. Manson-Bahr  
     (per A.L.T.).  
 R. W. Mayo.  
 Col. R. Meinertzhagen.  
 M. Milne-Watson  
     (per E.M.N.).  
 A. F. Mitchell (x).  
 D. W. Musselwhite.  
 D. Nethersole-Thomp-  
     son (per G.C.L.).  
 Mrs E. S. Nevinson.  
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 A. H. V. Smith (x).  
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 I. B. Smith (x).  
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 J. Steele (per R.Pr.D.).  
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 Dr W. W. Thomson (x).  
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 A. V. Tucker.  
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 Miss M. S. van Oostveen.  
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 E. H. Warnington (x).  
 S. Watson (x).  
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 D. S. Whicher (x)  
     (D.S.Wh.).  
 J. S. Wightman.  
 J. A. Wigzell.  
 I. A. Williams (x).  
 S. Williams (x).  
 D. Scott Wilson (D.S.Wi.).  
 H. F. Witherby.  
 G. C. Woollorton (x).  
 W. A. Wright.  
 Miss E. M. Wyatt.  
 B. W. Young.

## Birds in the London Area, 1942.

### A REPORT ON BIRD LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

#### **Carrion-Crow.** *Corvus corone corone* L.

- E. Three were seen disembowelling a hedgehog killed by a car, Chigwell, Sept. 20 (K.E.H.).  
S. Two attacked and killed a thrush in three minutes, Kew Gardens, Jan. 24 (A.F.M.).

#### **Rook.** *Corvus f. frugilegus* L.

- M. A new rookery with eight occupied nests in two elms between Bushy Park and Hampton Wick Station may have been colonised by birds disturbed from Bushy Park, as reported in 1941 (E.W.P.).

#### **Starling.** *Sturnus v. vulgaris* L.

An account of the starling roosts of the London area by R.S.R.F. will be found in the *London Naturalist* for 1942.

#### **British Jay.** *Garrulus glandarius rufitergum* Hart.

- M. Central Parks, the pair which bred last year evidently stayed on, as they were reported between St James's Park and Kensington Gardens in most months; a brood of young birds was by Lancaster House on July 7 (E.M.N.) and one young in Kensington Gardens on Nov. 10 (G.C.L.).  
S. Battersea Park, one in September had possibly strayed from the Central Parks (C.B.A., E.M.N.).

#### **Golden Oriole.** *Oriolus o. oriolus* (L.).

- [E. High Beach, what was probably a first-year male of this species was heard repeatedly and glimpsed several times in a grove of birches on June 19; the song consisted of a melodious flute-like note not unlike that of a blackbird, occasionally interspersed with one or two harsh, scolding notes; the bird persistently kept to the tree-tops, and the observers had great difficulty in getting a view, but on the one occasion when colours could be seen, moss-green, golden yellow and ash-grey were noted in the plumage; it was about the size of a blackbird (S.A., D.W.G., W.A.W.).]

#### **Hawfinch.** *Coccothraustes c. coccothraustes* (L.).

- E. Again very numerous in Epping Forest and environs in the early part of the year, but remarkably scarce in the latter part; unusually large numbers frequented Highams Park in Feb. and Mar., up to 200 being counted on Feb. 28 and Mar. 1 (K.E.H., W.A.W.). At Lords Bushes on Mar. 29 K.E.H. observed a probable display flight (not recorded in *Handbook*), with a bird singing while it flew round in half a dozen circles at a height of 60 ft.; the flight was owl-like and flapping.

- H. Broxbourne Bury, 8-10 in oak and cherry trees on Apr. 14 (A.G.R., F.J.R.). Cuffley Great Wood, four on Feb. 15 (E.R.P., E.D.P.).
- K. Knockholt, a pair on Aug. 6 (P.A.A.).
- M. Highgate-Ken Wood area, one or two seen four times, Apr.-Aug. (R.S.R.F., V.R.G.). Whitewebbs Park, reported on Apr. 30 and May 17 (R.S.R.F., A.G.R., F.J.R.).
- S. Many records from usual North Downs localities; Chipstead, a female feeding three young on July 25 and c. 15 in a garden on July 26 (L.I.C.).

**British Goldfinch.** *Carduelis c. britannica* (Hart.).

- E. Nested at Buckhurst Hill, Great Parndon and Woodford Green (G.D., K.E.H.). A roost in an orchard at Sewardstone was used by c. 36 birds at the end of Nov., decreasing to 14 on Dec. 26 and 9 on Dec. 30, when the roost was last used (P.F.C.R.).
- M. Inner London, one over Chelsea on July 3 (E.M.N.) and three young birds at Earl's Court on Aug. 17 (M.C.).
- S. Nested at Addington, Godstone, Kew and Tadworth (H.B., A.F.M., H.E.P.).

**Siskin.** *Carduelis spjnus* (L.).

- E. Highams Park, small numbers as usual early in the year.
- K. Westerham, small flocks at Kent Hatch on Apr. 10 and a big movement there on Apr. 13 (J. G. Harrison in *S.E.B.R.*).
- M. Usual reports of small numbers from Brent Park, Bushy Park and Fray's River, Uxbridge early in the year. Denham Lock, c. 20 on Feb. 15 (R.H.M.R.). Hampstead Garden Suburb, two in a garden on Mar. 1 (G.W.). Hampstead Heath, 40 in silver birches on Feb. 15 (J.S.C.). Hillingdon, several on Jan. 9 (T.L.B.).
- S. Godstone, 36 on alders on Jan. 18 (L.I.C.). Leatherhead, some by R. Mole on Mar. 14 (H.J.B.).

**Mealy Redpoll.** *Carduelis f. flammaea* (L.).

- M. Ruiship, two were watched feeding on willow-herb (*Epilobium*) in Park Wood on Jan. 24 at a distance of 15-20 yards by T.B. and D.S.Wi., who write:

“The underparts were white and hardly streaked; flanks greyish-white with some streaks; back greyish-brown with marked light grey feather edgings giving a very streaky appearance; wing-bar appeared greyish-white. A light grey stripe over the eye and the bright crimson of the forehead made ‘redpoll’ stand out in a manner never noticed in Lesser Redpolls.”

**Lesser Redpoll.** *Carduelis flammaea cabaret* (P. L. S. Müll.).

Reported as scarcer than usual in Epping Forest, Cuffley Great Wood and Uxbridge.

- H. Abbots Langley S.F., flocks of 70-80 on Jan. 21 and c. 100 on Feb. 10 (I.B.S.).
- M. Highgate area, present in breeding season (R.S.R.F.).

S. Nested on Walton Heath (H.B., L.I.C.). Kew Gardens, present in breeding season (A.F.M.).

**Common Crossbill.** *Loxia c. curvirostra* L.

S. Tadworth, a flock of ten on Nov. 8 (H.B.).

**Brambling.** *Fringilla montifringilla* L.

E. Epping Forest, seen frequently by several observers up to Apr. 11, max. 80-100 on Jan. 21 (W.A.W.).

K. Longfield district, much less numerous than in 1941 (F. Stodart in *S.E.B.R.*).

M. Kensington Gardens, one by Peter Pan statue on Dec. 27 (R.Pr.D.).

S. Small numbers reported from usual haunts.

**Corn-Bunting.** *Emberiza calandra* L.

E. Hainault, one singing from a lamp-post at Whalebone Lane North and another to the west of it on Aug. 14 (B.C.L.B.).

H. Bushey, one on telegraph wire on Watford By-pass on Aug. 15 (T.B.).

M. Present at Harefield, Northolt and Staines in the breeding season.

**Girl-Bunting.** *Emberiza c. cirrus* L.

S. Nested in an evergreen hedge in a garden at Chipstead (L.I.C., H.B.). Banstead, a female on July 30 (L.I.C.). Little Bookham, a female on Feb. 14 (H.J.B.). Walton Heath, a male on Nov. 22 (H.B.).

**Tree-Sparrow.** *Passer m. montanus* (L.).

E. Nested at Abridge, Chigwell and Chingford (several pairs); flock of 42 at Buckhurst Hill on Dec. 20 (K.E.H.).

H. Wormley, half a dozen on Mar. 28 and one on May 2 (A.G.R., F.J.R.); large flocks at Abbots Langley and Watford S.F.s early in the year (I.B.S.).

K. Chislehurst, a pair feeding young in the nest on Aug. 13 (K. C. Searle in *S.E.B.R.*).

S. Nested in Beddington Park, where excreta were removed by one parent (C.B.A.); reported from usual haunts in winter, max. 60-80 at Beddington S.F. on Oct. 4 (T.L.B., H.B., L.I.C.). Ham Gravel Pits, 120 on Nov. 22, 1941 (E.G.P.).

**Wood-Lark.** *Lullula a. arborea* (L.).

K. Longfield district, has decreased over last few years; breeding stock much depleted in 1942 (F. Stodart in *S.E.B.R.*).

S. No nesting records, but reported from Fetcham in Feb. (H.J.B.), Richmond Park in July (D.A.R.), and on the North Downs in Oct. (C.P.C.).

**Meadow-Pipit.** *Anthus pratensis* (L.).

M. London Dock, one perching on a piece of floating driftwood during first week in Jan. (J.F.).

**Yellow Wagtail.** *Motacilla flava flavissima* (Blyth).

- E. Nested by the Lea Valley reservoirs as usual (W.A.W.); fewer than usual in Chigwell district (K.E.H.).
- H. Fewer nesting pairs on Croxley Moors (J.A.S.) and none at all seen by Stockers Lake, Rickmansworth (G.K.McC.).
- M./S. Noted in small numbers on both spring and autumn passage by the Thames from Ham to Hammersmith.
- S. Late date, four at Beddington S.F. on Oct. 4 (T.L.B., H.B., L.I.C.).

**Grey Wagtail.** *Motacilla c. cinerea* Tunst.

- H. Watford, no young birds seen in Cassiobury Park as in previous years (J.A.S.).
- M. Bushy Park, a pair feeding four newly-fledged young on May 30 must have nested, making a new breeding record for the park (J.E.R., E.W.P.); Whitewebbs Park, one seen throughout the year and a pair in May (L.J.J.). Inner London, one by E.W.S. reservoir in Harley St. on Oct. 18 (C. A. Joll) and one at static water tanks in Berkeley Square on several mornings in Nov. (C.H.); one by the Long Water or in the Dell, Hyde Park, several times in Nov. (C.H., B. A. Richards).
- S. Nested again at Fetcham (H.J.B.).

**Pied Wagtail.** *Motacilla alba yarrellii* Gould.

- S. See note on p. 17.

**Tree-Creeper.** *Certhia familiaris britannica* Ridgw.

- M. Kensington Gardens, one on Dec. 4 (C.H.).

**British Great Tit.** *Parus major newtoni* Prazak.

- S. Carshalton, a bird trapped and ringed in a garden in Denmark Rd. on May 28, 1939, was retrapped on Dec. 17, 1939, caught sitting on eight eggs in a nesting-box in the garden on Apr. 28, 1940, and finally found dead from an unknown cause in another nesting-box in the same garden on Apr. 22, 1942 (C.B.A.). Kew Gardens, one attacked a bumble-bee and ate it before it was dead, Apr. 5 (A.F.M.).

**British Willow-Tit.** *Parus atricapillus kleinschmidti* Hellm.

- B. Denham, two on Jan. 24 and one on Mar. 1, also seen by the canal in autumn and winter (T.B.). Iver Heath, a pair usually about during early spring, autumn and winter (C.Do.).
- E. Epping Forest, up to seven birds seen at Connaught Water and Whitehall Plain several times from June 28 to July 21, when young birds on the wing were being fed by adults (K.E.H.); Chingford Plain, two on Oct. 25 (R.H.M.R.).
- H. Oxhey, one heard twice at the end of Aug. (R.S.R.F.).
- M. Harefieldmoor Wharf, two on Jan. 24 (T.B.). Ruislip Common, seen regularly except between Mar. 26 and Aug. 1 (T.B., T.L.B.). Uxbridge, one by Fray's River on Jan. 24 (T.B.).



- S. Bookham Common, noted on May 10 (T.L.B.). Burgh Heath, one on Mar. 14 (H.B.). Walton Heath, two on Aug. 3 (H.B.).

**Great Grey Shrike.** *Lanius e. excubitor* L.

- S. One watched on Ham Common for a quarter of an hour on Jan. 17 flew off towards Richmond Park (E.C.W.).

**Red-backed Shrike.** *Lanius c. collurio* L.

- E. Epping Forest area, eleven pairs nested in the central part of the forest, two pairs at Sewardstone and one pair at Chigwell S.F. (K.E.H. and others); Great Parndon, one pair nested (G.D.).  
 H. Radlett, one pair nested on Newberries golf course, one or two other pairs also present (M.G.R.).  
 M. Enfield, one, possibly two, pairs nested near Hillyfields Park (L.J.J.); Ruislip, six out of seven pairs definitely nested (G.K.McC. and others).  
 S. Nested on Bookham Common (three pairs, C.B.A., T.L.B.), Fetcham Downs (one pair, H.J.B.), and Mitcham Common (four pairs, W.W.T., C.B.A.).

**Waxwing.** *Bombycilla g. garrulus* (L.).

- M. Kensington Park Gardens, five with fieldfares stayed for about two hours eating pyracanthus berries in a private garden on Jan. 22 (R.M. in *The Times*, Jan. 26).  
 S. Cheam, a male feeding on haws on Mar. 14 (D. A. Odd in *The Field*, Apr. 11).

**Spotted Flycatcher.** *Muscicapa s. striata* (Pall.).

- M. Kensington Gardens, several young seen (G.C.L., S.Ct.). Late date, South Harrow, Oct. 23 (T.L.B.).

**British Goldcrest.** *Regulus r. anglorum* Hart.

- E. Epping Forest, one of three birds seen at Connaught Water on July 19 was singing, though it had a plain yellow crest and therefore presumably a female (K.E.H.).  
 S. Generally reported as scarce this year.

**Firecrest.** *Regulus i. ignicapillus* (Temm.).

- K. Westerham, one feeding on brambles on the North Downs during a slight snowfall on Jan. 10; observer was able to approach within a few feet and note the white superciliary eyestripe very plainly, as well as the almost crimson centre of the crown (P.A.A.).  
 S. Epsom Common, one on Dec. 5 (C.B.A., see also *B.B.*, 36, 203); the same observer saw a firecrest in the same locality on Dec. 25, 1941 (*L.B.R.*, 1941, p. 8).

**Wood-Warbler.** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* (Bechst.).

- M. Kensington Gardens, two on Apr. 22 (G.C.L.). Ken Wood, one singing on June 21 was not observed at any other time (R.S.R.F.).

**Grasshopper-Warbler.** *Locustella n. naevia* (Bodd.).

- E. Epping Forest, two near Connaught Water, May 1-31 (K.E.H., C.Q.P., W.A.W.); K.E.H. approached within three feet of the birds without them showing signs of fear.
- H. Heard at Chandlers Cross on May 2 (P.C.), and north of West Hyde on May 31 (T.B.).
- M. Ruislip Res., present between June 18 and Aug. 30 (T.L.B.).
- S. Bookham Common, one pair nested (P.J.H. and others); Dulwich, at least one pair present on Cleeve Hall estate in Apr. (L.R.E.).

**Reed-Warbler.** *Acrocephalus s. scirpaceus* (Herm.).

- E. Nested again at Chigwell and Sewardstone (K.E.H., W.A.W.).
- H. At least two pairs nested at Stockers Lake, Rickmansworth (G.K.McC.).
- M. Present in the breeding season at Ruislip (T.L.B.) and along the Thames at Chiswick Eyot and Sion House Marsh (C.Do., H.G., G.C.L.).

**Garden-Warbler.** *Sylvia borin* (Bodd.).

- M. South Kensington, one singing in grounds of Natural History Museum on May 14 (E.P.L.). Kensington Gardens, one singing in Flower Walk, May 12 (C.H.).

**Blackcap.** *Sylvia a. atricapilla* (L.).

- M. Kensington Gardens, one singing in shrubbery by Serpentine Bridge on May 19 (C.H.).

**Whitethroat.** *Sylvia c. communis* Lath.

- E. Ilford, when some boys beat a nettle bed so that a whitethroat's nest slipped to the ground, the hen continued to sit and successfully reared the brood (H.G.G.).
- M. Green Park, noted on May 14 (E.M.N.). Regent's Park, two at Three Island Pond in the Zoo on May 20 (J. Bailey).

**Lesser Whitethroat.** *Sylvia c. curruca* (L.).

- M. Kensington Gardens, one sang frequently near the Long Water between May 9 and July 2 (G.C.L., E.M.N.).
- S. Wandsworth Common, a pair nested nine feet from the ground within three feet of a much-used public footpath; observer has never before seen or heard the species in many years' experience of the district (D.W.M.).

**Fieldfare.** *Turdus pilaris* L.

- M. Notting Hill, flock of 20 feeding on haws with waxwings (q.v.) on Jan. 22 (R.M.).

**Wheatear.** *Oenanthe oe. oenanthe* (L.).

Passage through the area lasted from Mar. 21 (Hampstead Heath, V.R.G.) to May 25 (Hampstead Heath, C.Q.P.) in the spring, and from Aug. 22 (Great Parndon, G.D.) to Oct. (Beckenham golf course, H.G.) in the autumn.

M. Cripplegate churchyard, one feeding in blitzed area on Sept. 10 (H.G.G.).

**Whinchat.** *Saxicola rubetra* (L.).

E. Nested at Buckhurst Hill and probably at Chigwell S.F. (K.E.H.).

E./H. Lea Valley, three pairs located between Roydon and Hoddesdon (G.D.) and two nests found near Hoddesdon (A.G.R., F.J.R.).

H. Records of nesting near Rickmansworth (P.F.S.), probable nesting between Maple Cross and Springwell (G.K.McC.) and a pair north of West Hyde on May 31 (T.B.) may all refer to the same birds.

M. Nested at Northolt (T.B., W.R.P.).

**British Stonechat.** *Saxicola torquata hibernans* (Hart.).

S. Mitcham Common, only one pair this year (W.W.T.).

**Black Redstart.** *Phoenicurus ochrurus gibraltariensis* (Gm.).

M./S. For 1942 records of birds seen in the summer months see separate note on p. 17. The following additional records for 1941 have been received: Hayes, Middx., a young male, almost lacking the white wing-patch, in a brick-yard on May 17-18; Hillingdon, an adult male in full plumage seen daily in factory grounds, Sept. 20-25 (J.C.W., see also *B.B.*, 36, 203); Wandsworth, a pair nested in a fireplace in a bombed building (H.H.V.C., see also *B.B.*, 36, 137).

S. One on the Thames foreshore opposite Hammersmith on Jan. 21, 1942, probably a female (V.R.G.).

**Nightingale.** *Luscinia m. megarhyncha* Brehm.

S. Ham Common, one that sang from May 10 to mid-June was the first record for this locality for five years (A.F.M., F.R.M.).

**Red-spotted Bluethroat.** *Luscinia s. svecica* (L.).

H. Elstree Res., one on Mar. 4 (M.G.R., see *B.B.*, 35, 273).

**Sand-Martin.** *Riparia r. riparia* (L.).

S. The colony on Ham Common has decreased to two pairs (A.F.M.).

**Kingfisher.** *Alcedo atthis ispida* L.

E. Roding valley, at least six pairs bred between Woodford Bridge and Abridge (K.E.H.).

S. Teddington Lock, a pair seen on June 29 appeared to be breeding (H.G.G.).

**Green Woodpecker.** *Picus viridis pluvius* Hart.

See separate note on p. 20.

**British Great Spotted Woodpecker.** *Dryobates major anglicus* (Hart.).

M. Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, frequently seen, especially early in the year, but also Sept. and Nov.; may have nested in the Sanctuary (G.C.L. and others).

- British Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.** *Dryobates minor comminutus* (Hart.).  
 M. Inner London, one by Temple Lodge on Apr. 12 (Miss E. R. Glover), and a pair in Kensington Gardens on June 19 (G.C.L.).
- Wryneck.** *Jynx t. torquilla* L.  
 S. Nested in an old apple-tree on Bookham Common (L.I.C. and others), and in a nesting box in a garden at Limpsfield as in 1941 (B.E.B.).
- Cuckoo.** *Cuculus canorus canorus* L.  
 M. Heard in Hyde Park on Apr. 30 (C.H.) and Kensington Gardens on June 26 (G.C.L.).
- Little Owl.** *Athene noctua vidalii* A. E. Brehm.  
 M. South Kensington, one in Museum grounds on Feb. 13 (G. V. Carvell); Grays Inn, one calling at 7.15 p.m. on July 6 (K.E.H.).
- Peregrine Falcon.** *Falco p. peregrinus* Tunst.  
 E. Squirrels Heath, one flying at a height of about 200 ft. on Apr. 27 (R.Ph.D.).  
 M. Westminster, one on Big Ben on May 27 (S.W.). The date of the bird seen at Westminster in 1941 (*L.B.R.*, 1941, p. 12) should have been given as July 7.  
 [S. Richmond Park, a large bird of prey put up in Isabella Plantation on June 21 was probably of this species, but the observer did not get a satisfactory view (D.A.R.).]
- Hobby.** *Falco s. subbuteo* L.  
 K. Elmstead Woods, one flying S.W. on Apr. 10 (N. Moore in Harrison's "Birds of Sevenoaks," 1942, p. 155).  
 S. Esher Common, one watched hawking over the Black Pond for an hour on Sept. 7, 1940 (J.S.W.).
- Merlin.** *Falco columbarius aesalon* Tunst.  
 S. Richmond, one in the Old Deer Park on Mar. 8 (G.C.L.).
- Kestrel.** *Falco t. tinnunculus* L.  
 M./S. Inner London, many records from the area within the triangle Kensington Gardens-Battersea Park-County Hall.
- Common Buzzard.** *Buteo b. buteo* (L.).  
 M. Sudbury Town, one flying over at 8.30 a.m. on Aug. 4 (R.H.M.R., see also *B.B.*, 36, 117).  
 M./S. One soaring at about 500 ft. over the R. Thames between Kingston and Hampton Court on June 6 (B. A. Richards, *B.B.*, 36, 164).  
 S. Putney, one over on Sept. 10, 1940 (B. A. Richards, *ibid.*).

**Montagu's Harrier.** *Circus pygargus* (L.).

[S. Richmond Park, a number of feathers found outside the badger holt below Dann's Pond on Apr. 4 were identified at the British Museum (Natural History) as those of a female or young male Harrier, almost certainly of this species (D.A.R.).]

**Sparrow-Hawk.** *Accipiter n. nisus* (L.).

H. Croxley Common Moors, nested in a fir-tree; on May 16 the nest contained three eggs, on May 21 there were four eggs and bark had been added to the lining of the nest, and on May 22 there were five eggs and more bark had been added (P.C.).

M. Hampstead-Highgate area, seen throughout the year and probably nested (V.R.G., R.S.R.F.).

**Common Heron.** *Ardea c. cinerea* L.

E. There were 49 occupied nests at Walthamstow Res., as in 1941 (W.A.W., E.T.N.) and 8 at Wanstead Park, compared with 6 in 1941 (W.H.F.).

S. There were 4 occupied nests at Gatton Park, compared with 2 in 1941 (G.W.P.). At Burwood Park, Hersham, there were no occupied nests in the main heronry (H.D.C.), but one isolated nest was found (R.S.R.F.); in 1941 there were 8 nests here. At Richmond Park the birds were subject to serious disturbances, including the cutting down of some of their nesting trees, and though 38 nests were counted in Sidmouth Plantation on Apr. 18, eight of these were later deserted; in addition, two nests were built in the Pond Plantation, for the first time since 1927, but one of these was also deserted; in 1941 there were 56 nests (D.A.R.).

**Brent Goose.** *Branta bernicla* (L.). ? subsp.

S. Beddington Lane, one disturbed from a gravel-pit on Mar. 19 was very dark, and probably referred to the dark-breasted subspecies (*B. b. bernicla* (L.)) (L.P.).

**Sheld-Duck.** *Tadorna tadorna* (L.).

M./S. R. Thames, one by Putney Bridge on Feb. 14 (I.B.S.); one flying over the towpath near Hammersmith Bridge on Dec. 26 (R.S.R.F.) was also seen on Lonsdale Rd. Res. on the same day (E.M.W.).

**Mallard.** *Anas p. platyrhynchos* L.

M. Westminster, a young brood was seen on an E.W.S. tank in Victoria St. on Aug. 20 (T.L.B.).

**Gadwall.** *Anas strepera* L.

E. Sewardstone Gravel Pit, a pair on May 9 had been there about a week; two on Sept. 5 (W.A.W., K.E.H.).

M./S. R. Thames, by Chiswick Eyot, max. 32 on Sept. 30 (W.R.P.) and Oct. 29 (T.B.); by Waterloo Bridge, a pair on May 18 (T.L.B.).

S. Battersea Park lake, three drakes on Mar. 30 (C.B.A.); Lonsdale Road Res., a brood of nine on July 9 (T.B.).

**Wigeon.** *Anas penelope* L.

- E. Sewardstone Gravel Pit, a drake on Mar. 28; in autumn seen from Sept. 19 to end of year, max. 15 on Dec. 25 (W.A.W., K.E.H.).  
 M. Ruislip Res., five on Mar. 21 (T.B.).  
 M./S. R. Thames by Chiswick Eyot, up to four from Jan. to early Mar. (T.B., G.C.L. and others).  
 S. Fetcham Pond, one on Mar. 12 (H.J.B.).

**Pintail.** *Anas acuta acuta* L.

- M. Kensington Gardens, a drake on the Round Pond on Mar. 3 and 9 (C.B.A., G.C.L., L.P.). Whitewebbs Park, a drake on the Wildwood lake on Dec. 20 (H.H.S.H.).  
 M./S. R. Thames, a drake in Chelsea Basin on Feb. 25 (T.B.) was seen fighting with Mallard drakes in the river nearby on Mar. 16 (Miss M. G. Best); an immature drake opposite Sion House on Dec. 10 (A.F.M.).

**Shoveler.** *Spatula clypeata* (L.).

- E. Sewardstone Gravel Pit, two on Apr. 26 and one on July 25 (W.A.W., K.E.H.).  
 H. Elstree Res., a pair on Apr. 8 and 18 (R.S.R.F., I.B.S.).  
 M. Brent Res., a pair on Mar. 29 (T.L.B.). Kensington Gardens, a pair on the Round Pond on Mar. 13 (C.H.).  
 S. Lonsdale Road Res., three drakes on Nov. 22 (T.L.B.).

**Common Pochard.** *Aythya ferina* (L.).

- M./S. The tendency, which has been marked since the winter of 1939-40, for this and the following species to frequent the tidal waters of the Thames between Teddington Lock and London Bridge in some numbers continued during 1942, the largest flock seen being 175 at Hammersmith on Nov. 22 (T.L.B.).

**Tufted Duck.** *Aythya fuligula* (L.).

- K. Chipstead, bred on ballast water, bringing off a brood of eight (Dr J. M. Harrison in *S.E.B.R.*).  
 M. Millwall Dock, 58 on Jan. 27 (J.F.).  
 M./S. Frequented R. Thames in some numbers between Kew and Westminster, especially early in the year, max. 700-800 at Chelsea on Feb. 14 (R.H.M.R.).  
 S. Kew Gardens, bred but only one young reared (A.F.M.).

**Scaup-Duck.** *Aythya m. marila* (L.).

- M. Ruislip Res., an adult male on Mar. 21 (T.B.). St James's Park, a drake seen on Mar. 21 stayed for less than a week (L.D.).  
 M./S. R. Thames by Chiswick Eyot, and adjacent Lonsdale Road Res., a pair on Feb. 5 (T.B., W.R.P.), increasing to seven, including five adult males, on Feb. 20 (E.G.P.), and decreasing again till only one bird remained on Apr. 8 (T.B.); two ducks were on the river opposite Sion House on Feb. 22 (G.C.L.).

**Goldeneye.** *Bucephala c. clangula* (L.).

- E. Walthamstow Res., an adult drake on Feb. 9 (L.J.D.).  
 H. Rickmansworth, one on Stockers Lake on Mar. 1 (T.B.).  
 M. Brent Res., one on Nov. 8 (T.B.). Staines Res., at least six on Dec. 11 (T.B.).  
 M./S. R. Thames, up to five (one drake) by Chiswick Eyot from Jan. 17 to Feb. 11 (T.B., W.R.P., R.H.M.R.); four by Sion House on Feb. 22 and Mar. 8 (G.C.L.).  
 S. Lonsdale Road Res., one brown-headed bird on Dec. 24 (T.B.).

**Goosander.** *Mergus merganser merganser* L.

- E. Connaught Water, three (two drakes) at 7 a.m. on Mar. 23 (K.E.H.). Walthamstow Res., present from Feb. 12 to Mar. 14, max. 12 on Feb. 28 (W.A.W., C.Q.P., L.J.D.); on Mar. 14 one caught two 6-8 in. roach in a few seconds and swallowed both with difficulty (K.E.H.).  
 H. Hamper Mill, 16 on Jan. 31 and eleven on Feb. 2 (I.B.S.).  
 M./S. R. Thames, recorded between Hammersmith and Kew Gardens from the beginning of the year to Mar. 25, max. 36 on Feb. 22 (G.C.L.), and from Nov. 18 onwards, max. seven on Dec. 10 (A.F.M.).

**Red-breasted Merganser.** *Mergus serrator* L.

- M./S. R. Thames, a drake opposite Kew Gardens on Jan. 25 (E.C.W., E.M.W.).

**Smew.** *Mergus albellus* L.

- E. Walthamstow Res., present from Jan. 17 to Mar. 21, max. 62 (25 drakes) on Jan. 31, and over 60 on Feb. 14 (C.Q.P.).  
 H. Hamper Mill, eight (six drakes) on Mar. 12 (I.B.S.). Radlett, a drake at Moor Mill from Feb. 19 to Mar. 1 (I.B.S.). Rickmansworth, seven on Stockers Lake on Mar. 1 (T.B.).  
 M. Brent Res., about eight (four drakes) on Mar. 19 (T.B.). St James's Park, a red-headed bird on Mar. 7 (R.W.H.).  
 M./S. R. Thames by Chiswick Eyot, present from Jan. 10 to Mar. 8, max. 14 on Feb. 9 (T.B.) and Feb. 22 (G.C.L.); opposite Sion House, two on Feb. 22 and Mar. 8 (G.C.L.).

**Cormorant.** *Phalacrocorax c. carbo* (L.).

- M. St James's Park, an unpinioned bird joined the pinioned one on Aug. 31 and stayed till the end of the year (T.L.B.).  
 M./S. R. Thames, one at Hammersmith on Feb. 2 (W.R.P.).

**Great Crested Grebe.** *Podiceps c. cristatus* (L.).

- B. Bred at Iver (A.V.T.) and probably at Colnbrook (S.C.).  
 E. Bred as usual at Sewardstone, also on Eagle Pond, Snaresbrook (K.E.H., W.A.W.).

- H. Lea valley, four pairs bred in gravel pits between Broxbourne and Waltham Abbey (G.D.). Hamper Mill, four, possibly five, pairs bred (G.K.McC.). Rickmansworth, one pair bred on Stockers Lake and another on the gravel pit near Springwell (G.K.McC.).
- M. Bred in Gunnersbury Park (A.F.M.). Bushy Park, a pair attempted to breed but were driven away by a Coot and were last seen in June (J.E.R., E.W.P.). Hyde Park, one on the Serpentine on Mar. 17 and Dec. 24 (C.H.).
- S. Bred at Gatton Park (four pairs, G.W.P.), Godstone Town Pond (two pairs, H.B., L.I.C.), and Lonsdale Road Res. (two pairs, both nests on artificial obstructions (G.C.L., see also *B.B.*, 36, 56).

**Little Grebe.** *Pediceps r. ruficollis* (Pall.).

- M. St James's Park, adult with two young on Sept. 24 (G.C.L.); two regularly from Oct. 30 to Nov. 6 (T.L.B.). Kensington Gardens, one on the Round Pond on July 21 (G.C.L.) and Nov. 19 (C.H.).
- S. Fetcham Pond, a male dived and attacked from below a Coot which approached too close to its nest (H.J.B.).

**Woodpigeon.** *Columba p. palumbus* L.

A reduction in numbers both of breeding birds and of winter visitors was reported from Great Parndon (Essex), Bushy Park (Middlesex), and Ham Common (Surrey); in Kensington Gardens there was a decrease in numbers of both this species and the **Stock-Dove** (*Columba oenas* L.) owing to the somewhat indiscriminate shooting of pigeons to protect the allotments (G.C.L.).

**Turtle-Dove.** *Streptopelia t. turtur* (L.).

- M. St James's Park, two on July 20 (T.L.B.).

**Common Curlew.** *Numenius a. arquata* (L.).

- E. Sewardstone, one on Mar. 23 (W.A.W.).
- M. Hampton, one on filter-bed on May 28 (E.W.P.).
- M./S. Kew Bridge, one flying up river on Apr. 19 (A.F.M.).

**Woodcock.** *Scolopax rusticola* L.

- E. Epping Forest, one flushed at the Cuckoo Pits on Jan. 31 (K.E.H.).
- H. Whippendell Woods, one on Mar. 28 (P.C.).
- M. Bushy Park, seen several times in Feb. (J.E.R.). Ruislip, one on Feb. 15 and 27 (T.L.B.) and on Dec. 20 (R.H.M.R.).
- S. Richmond Park, one on Jan. 11 (D.A.R.).

**Common Snipe.** *Capella g. gallinago* (L.).

- M. Hyde Park, one on Nov. 19 (C.H.).

**Jack Snipe.** *Lymnocyrtus minimus* Brünn.

- H. Croxley Moors, recorded as usual in winter (J.A.S.).
- M. Ruislip Res., one on Jan. 18, and two on Dec. 20 (R.H.M.R.).



**Knot.** *Calidris canutus canutus* (L.).

S. Barnes, one in winter plumage on the Thames mud near the railway bridge on Mar. 9 (E.G.P., see also *B.B.*, 35, 276).

**Dunlin.** *Calidris alpina* (L.) ? subsp.

S. Up to four on Thames foreshore opposite Chiswick Eyot, Jan. 22-28 (T.B., K.E.H., G.C.L., E.G.P., W.R.P.); one in the same place on Mar. 8 (G.C.L.).

**Common Sandpiper.** *Actitis hypoleucos* (L.).

Passage through the area lasted from Apr. 26 to May 18 in the spring, and from July 22 to Oct. 9 in the autumn.

**Green Sandpiper.** *Tringa ochropus* L.

E. Roding valley, one frequently flushed from same spot at Buckhurst Hill between Feb. 20 and Mar. 8, also one on Sept. 27 (K.E.H., D.J.B.).

S. Fetcham, one on the cress-beds on Dec. 20 (C.B.A.). Lonsdale Road Res., two on Aug. 6 and Sept. 23 (T.L.B.).

**Golden Plover.** *Pluvialis apricaria* (L.) ? subsp.

E. Chadwell Heath, a flock of c. 50 on Dec. 22 and a dozen on Dec. 23 (A.V.T.). Chigwell S.F., seven flew over on Jan. 25 (K.E.H., D.J.B.). Buckhurst Hill, two flocks of 20 and 10 flying up the Roding valley on Jan. 8 and 9 (D.J.B.). Hornchurch, three flying over on Jan. 13 (A.V.T.).

M. Harefield, six on Mar. 1 (T.B.).

S. Lower Kingswood, two on Mar. 15 (H.B.).

**Grey Plover.** *Squatarola squatarola* (L.).

M. One seen and heard on Thames foreshore near Chiswick Eyot on Jan. 1 (H.G.A.).

**Lapwing.** *Vanellus vanellus* (L.).

M. Kensington Gardens, a single very tame bird feeding on frozen ground on Jan. 18 (G.C.L.).

**British Oyster-Catcher.** *Haematopus ostralegus occidentalis* Neum.

S. Wimbledon Park, one on frozen lake on Jan. 25 (Capt. H. Foster in *B.B.*, 35, 232).

**Black Tern.** *Chlidonias n. niger* (L.).

S. Lonsdale Road Res., one on May 11 (T.B.).

**Scandinavian Lesser Black-backed Gull.** *Larus f. fuscus* L.

For a discussion of the status of this and the two following forms in the London area, see R.S.R.F. in *B.B.*, 36, 163.

M. Regent's Park, one on the lake on Dec. 8 (G.C.L.). S.W. India Dock, two on Jan. 27 (J.F.).

M./S. R. Thames at Hammersmith, one on Jan. 18 (G.C.L.), three on Jan. 25 (R.H.M.R.), two on Mar. 20 (L.P.), and two on Dec. 29 (G.C.L.).

**British Lesser Black-backed Gull.** *Larus fuscus graellsii* Brehm.

M./S. R. Thames, noted in every month of the year in King's Reach (T.L.B.); at Hammersmith, one to three noted in Jan., Feb. and Dec. by several observers.

**Great Black-backed Gull.** *Larus marinus* L.

M./S. Present on the Thames as far up as Hammersmith in every month of the year; recorded at Hammersmith in June by T.B. and in July by W.R.P.

**Glaucous Gull.** *Larus hyperboreus* Gunn.

**Iceland Gull.** *Larus glaucoides* Meyer.

See separate note on p. 21.

**Corncrake.** *Crex crex* (L.).

K. Westerham, one bird seen and another heard on Aug. 6 (P.A.A.).

**Water-Rail.** *Rallus a. aquaticus* L.

E. Walthamstow Res., one on a reed-grown channel near Banbury Res., Mar. 1 (L.J.D.).

H. Broxbourne, one in dyke beside railway line in Feb. (G.D.). West Hyde, one on Dec. 4, 19 and 27 (T.B., W.R.P.).

M. Ruislip Res., one on Jan. 4 (R.H.M.R.).

S. Fetcham Pond, one on Feb. 7 (H.J.B.).

**Common Partridge.** *Perdix p. perdix* (L.).

S. See separate note on p. 23.

**Red-legged Partridge.** *Alectoris r. rufa* (L.).

E. Pairs seen in the Roding valley at Chigwell and Loughton in the breeding season (D.J.B.); several records for the open ground on either side of Epping Forest in the autumn, max. 21 at a shoot at Sewardstone on Oct. 21 (K.E.H., C.Q.P., W.A.W.).

M. Harefield, c. 15 on Jan. 4 (W.R.P.) and one on May 31 (T.B.).

**Quail.** *Coturnix c. coturnix* (L.).

E. Great Parndon, one heard calling for a week at the end of May (G.D.).

## Pied Wagtails attacking other Birds.

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**T**HIS species as a fighter was new to me. On the first occasion a Pied Wagtail flew straight at a Song-Thrush perched at the top of the crab-apple tree by Fetcham Pond and knocked it off its twig. The thrush flew past me across the pond, while the wagtail went on over the vegetable field. On Sept. 18 I watched a Pied Wagtail flying just behind a House-Martin for a straight stretch and then a circuit, and the pace was very nearly equal. On the following day one of three House-Martins over the pond was attacked and chased by two Pied Wagtails which kept up with it until it reached the railway, when they gave up. On Sept. 25 a Pied Wagtail attacked a House-Martin over the pond and chased it at a height of about ten feet above the artichokes well out into the field before giving up. I was able to watch the martin against some light clouds until it came back and passed overhead to the pond. The wagtail was faster, nearly as quick in dodging, twisting and turning, and most determined in attack. On Oct. 7 I again watched a House-Martin being attacked by a Pied Wagtail. It dodged for a bit and then dropped some 20 feet and shook off the attack, after which it circled round half the pond at a height of 150-200 feet and flew away westwards down the river. Previously I should have thought that Pied Wagtails were much slower fliers than House-Martins, but they evidently have a reserve of speed which can be used on such occasions.

H. J. BURKILL.

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## Black Redstarts in London and Middlesex in the Summer of 1942.

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**T**HE Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus o. gibraltariensis*) has now almost become an established summer resident in London. Appearing first in 1927, it has been seen in every year since 1936 except 1937, and for the past three years, 1940-42, at least one pair has bred. During the summer of 1942 the breeding of at least three pairs in the County of London was established, four other pairs were present but not proved to have nested, and some 16-23 other singing males and three unattached hens or young males were recorded. The bulk of these were seen in a relatively small central area bounded on the south by the Thames and on the north by a line connecting Lots Rd. power station, Ladbroke Grove Station, Euston Station, Shoreditch parish church and the Tower. Within this area were two breeding pairs, three pairs not proved to have bred, 12-19 other singing males and three unattached hens or young males. The fact that unmated cocks frequently change their song-posts and sometimes use more than one on the same day makes it

impossible to compute the exact number of singing males in London during the year, but there appear to have been a minimum of 17 in Inner and 7 in Outer London. Perhaps the most interesting feature of the year was the extension of range outside the County of London to the Middlesex areas of Hayes, Southall and Wembley, though we now know them to have been present at Hayes and Hillingdon in Middlesex in 1941 also.

The three proved cases of breeding were at Wandsworth, where Brigadier Christie found a nest with young for the second year in succession; at Notting Hill, where Col. Meinertzhagen observed a pair with three young during August, and at Cripplegate in the City, where Mr H. G. Gould saw a hen with three young on Sept. 7. Though regular observation was made at the Westminster breeding site of 1940-41 by Mr A. L. N. Russell, there was no evidence of a pair nesting there in 1942. In addition, two unsubstantiated records of black redstarts breeding in London have been published by Richmond (1942), who mentions a pair nesting near the Embankment and another nest near his hotel. It is probable that more than three pairs did in fact breed, see for example under Fenchurch St. area *infra*.

A detailed list of records by areas follows:

### Inner London.

**The City of London:** 2 pairs (1 bred); 7-12 other singing males.

*Fenchurch St. area* (Crutched Friars to Mincing Lane): first reported, one singing, April 16 (L.J.J.); on June 28 G.C.L. heard four separate males singing in this area, two in Crutched Friars, one in Creechurch Lane and one in Billiter St.: last reported, one singing, July 12 (G.C.L.); the birds in Crutched Friars and Mincing Lane were stationary throughout June, and in the opinion of G.C.L. may have bred; D.N.-T. judged from the behaviour of the Mincing Lane bird that it had a nest, but failed to find it.

*Guildhall-Cripplegate area*: first record, a male on June 19 (H.G.G.) in Cripplegate churchyard; on June 20 the male was again seen accompanied by two hens or immature birds (H.G.G.); during late June and early July a cock often sang on the Guildhall (J.F.)—as this is only a few hundred yards from Cripplegate across open ground it was probably the same bird; on July 5 V.G. and J.R. saw a hen bird collecting food and disappearing at the base of a plane-tree near the tablet to St Alphege on Old London Wall about 100 yards from Cripplegate church, while a male was heard singing from a tall building nearby; H.G.G. continued to see one or both of the pair around Cripplegate during July and August, and noticed that they frequently disappeared into a window of the ruined vicarage where he thought they must have a nest; on Sept. 7 H.G.G. saw the hen with three young birds, thus definitely establishing breeding; cock and hen seen feeding on willow-herb in Barbican, Oct. 14, and cock seen off Aldersgate, Oct. 23 (H.G.G.).

*Fetter Lane-Law Courts area*: first record, one singing, May 17 (W.R.P.); presence of a second cock established on June 16 (R.W.H.); a hen as well as two cocks seen in Nevill's Court on June 20, and three birds, two being cocks, on June 22 (R.W.H.); last record, autumn (E.H.W.).

*Cannon St. Station area*: first record, June 11, one singing (P.A.B.); presence of second singing male established, June 21 (G.C.L.); last record, July 10 (P.A.B.).

*Cheapside-Mansion House Station area*: one singing in early June (R.N.T.), and on June 23 (H.B.) may have been the second bird in the Cannon St. Station area.

*Blackfriars*: one singing in Upper Thames St. on May 2 and again on May 25 was doubtless one of those which turned up elsewhere in the City in June (R.W.H.).

*Old Bailey*: one singing on May 1 (H.E.P.) was probably also one of those that later appeared elsewhere.

*Finsbury Pavement*: one in June (R.Pr.D.).

*Farringdon St. Station*: one in June (D.A.H.).

**Westminster**: one pair; two other singing males.

*Little Dean's Yard* (where a pair bred in 1940 and 1941): a pair on May 14 and a cock singing on May 15 (A.L.N.R.); a young male singing during the week ending June 8 (A.L.N.R.); one seen on July 8 (R.S.); no other records in spite of constant watch by A.L.N.R.; the bird reported by Richmond in Queen Anne's Gate was probably this one.

*St James's area*: first recorded, end of May, about the 28th, one singing (M.C., C.H.); it usually frequented a blitzed building at the junction of Bury St. and Ryder St.; last reported mid-July (C.H.); this was an area favoured by one of the 1940 birds before the blitz.

*Hanover Square area*: one sang on St George's church and Savile Row police station from May 1 to the end of June (I.G.).

**Bloomsbury**: three singing males, two hens or young birds.

*Tottenham Court Road area*: one singing on Maple's, June 6, was seen there or on University College Hospital on several dates till June 25 (F.J.F.B.); this was probably the same bird as was heard in Inn Yard on June 10 and 13 (R.S.R.F.); another bird sang in the area between Store St. and Malet St. between June 2 and July 2 (N.C.B., S.P.W.C., P.M.-B.) and was probably the same as the one singing at the junction of Percy St. and Tottenham Court Rd. on June 29 (Lord Amulree); Richmond records a pair in Tottenham Court Road, whose cock had the Y.M.C.A. building for his favourite song-post; on June 25 two hens or immature cocks were seen on waste ground in Malet St. (R.A.); it is worth noting that the area at the back of the British Museum was also frequented by black redstarts in 1939, well before the blitz.

*Red Lion Square*: one singing on June 6 (C.S.B.).

**Marylebone**: one singing male.

*Baker St. area*: one singing in Dorset St. from April to June 28 (G.C.T.S.) was probably the same as was heard at the junction of Paddington St. and Chiltern St. on June 9 (G.W.), in Montagu Square in Aug. and Sept. (H.Ba.), and as Richmond recorded on the tower of St Mary-le-bone church.

**Kensington**: two pairs (one bred).

*Campden Hill-Notting Hill area*: a pair seen on Campden Hill for a week in late April (R.M.); a pair with three birds of the year frequented a blitzed area in Archer St., Notting Hill, in August, being last seen on the 31st (R.M.); the pair with young were watched feeding on ants, subsequently identified as *Acanthomyops (Donisthorpia) niger* L. (N.B., the cock of the pair that bred at Westminster was seen feeding on ants in Little Dean's Yard on July 23, 1941); the pair seen on Campden Hill in April was probably the same as that seen in Archer St. in August.

*South Kensington-Earl's Court area*: one cock singing in the grounds of the British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Rd. (another locality much favoured by black redstarts well before the blitz), from April 10 to May 10 (N.B.K., G.C.L.); from early May onwards a male, probably the same bird, sang regularly in Philbeach Gardens, Earl's Court, being subsequently joined by a hen, and on May 28 both birds were fluttering round a possible nesting site in a niche high up in a house-wall above a static water tank (M.C.); the hen bird was not seen after this, though

the cock continued to sing until July 7 (M.C.): a bird heard singing on a high building in Cromwell Rd. at the corner of Lexham Gardens on June 8 was probably the same one (R.P.D.).

### Outer London.

#### North of the Thames.

**Highgate:** a young male singing in the N.W. corner of Highgate Cemetery on April 9-10 and not seen or heard again was probably a passage bird (R.S.R.F.).

**Hayes (Middx.):** an adult pair in full plumage seen on waste ground on June 14, 15, 17 and 23, but no evidence of breeding was obtained (J.C.W.).

**Southall:** an adult male seen and heard singing in a side street close to the canal and a timber-yard, July 5 (J.C.W.).

**Wembley:** present at the Palace of Engineering, where it had been seen since at least 1937 (G.W.C.).

#### South of the Thames.

**Wandsworth:** a pair nested in the same fireplace in a bombed building as in 1941, the young being seen in the nest in both years (H.H.V.C.).

**Lewisham:** one seen on Brockley Hill on April 12 (Capt. R. C. Jenkinson, *The Times*, July 7, 1942) was probably on passage.

R.S.R.F.

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#### REFERENCES.

- ANON. "The Course of Nature" in *The Times*, July 9, 14 and 16, 1942.  
 RICHMOND, W. K.: "Firewatchers and Firetails," *The Field*, Aug. 1, 1942, p. 119.  
 WITHERBY, H. F., and FITTER, R. S. R.: "Black Redstarts in England in the Summer of 1942." *Brit. Birds*, 36, 132-139, 203.

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## Probable Drumming by Green Woodpeckers.

THERE are so few authentic cases of drumming by Green Woodpeckers (for the principal references, see *B.B.*, 36, 37-39; Eric Parker, "World of Birds" (1941), pp. 127-34), that the following two instances, though neither conclusive in that the birds were not actually watched while drumming, are published here.

On April 29, 1942, I was in Hill Wood, Chingford, and heard a Green Woodpecker call repeatedly. I "answered" these calls. During this time I heard two spells of drumming, which I assumed came from a Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dryobates m. anglicus*) that must be quite close to me. Just afterwards I located the Green, but could not find the Great Spotted, nor did I hear the latter's call-note. The Green was about 30 yards away, and I thought the drumming was more powerful than any I had ever heard from a Great Spotted. The Green flew off and alighted under a hole in a tree about 50 yards away, where it was attacked by another Green; fighting, both birds fluttered to the ground. I then lost sight of them owing to the slope of the ground. Moving forward, I saw one bird back at the hole, a female: probably both were females. About 40 minutes later I heard another powerful drum, but did not see the bird. Soon after this I saw a hen at the nest for about 15 minutes. The other bird then returned and drove the first one away. Altogether I was watching for about two hours, and during the whole time I neither saw nor heard the call-note of either a Lesser or a Greater Spotted Woodpecker, so it would appear that it must have been a Green Woodpecker that drummed.

W. A. WRIGHT.

On May 30, 1942, I was standing under a tall oak in Ken Wood, on the dead top branch of which a Green Woodpecker was yaffling repeatedly. I distinctly heard a rather faint drum of the length usual in the Lesser rather than the Great Spotted Woodpecker. This appeared to come from the Green Woodpecker, which five minutes later flew to another tree. Though I stayed for half-an-hour no more drumming was heard, and during the whole time no other woodpecker was seen or heard. It may be noted that according to the song-chart in the *Handbook* the Great Spotted Woodpecker does not normally drum after mid-May, though the Lesser Spotted does so occasionally till mid-June.

R. S. R. FITTER.

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## A Bigamous Mute Swan.

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AT the beginning of 1942 there were two pairs of Mute Swans on Fetcham Pond, Leatherhead, Surrey. One male, however, attacked the other and drove him off the pond, and then mated with both the females, spending his time between the two nests, one on the east bank and the other on the island. The bank eggs hatched first, and five cygnets appeared on the water from the six eggs on May 28. Both parents were in attendance on these until the afternoon of June 17. On June 11 the island female had six cygnets with her on the water. As they were about two weeks younger than the other brood, it was easy to tell them apart. The male was with the female and the younger brood of cygnets, now reduced to five, on the afternoon of June 17. After that he seemed to devote most of his time to the older brood, and he kept the two lots apart, each evening driving the younger ones and their mother up the pond to an enclosure made by wire-netting. He was always followed by the other female and her brood, but having got the younger ones and the mother inside the wire he turned and headed off the others. Later on the two females used to take hold of each others' bills through the wire-netting, but this seemed to be done more as a friendly gesture than as an attempt to quarrel. Now (January 1943) they are about together and both broods have been reduced to two young each. The younger cygnets have left the pond, probably for the R. Mole.

H. J. BURKILL.

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## Iceland and Glaucous Gulls in the London Area in the Winter of 1941-42.

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FROM numerous records sent in by many observers it appears that during the winter of 1941-42 there were at least three Iceland Gulls (one adult, two immature) and two Glaucous Gulls (one adult, one immature) in the London area in the winter of 1941-42. Possibly there was another immature bird of each species present as well. This minor invasion was part of a movement noted all down the east coast of Great

Britain from the Shetlands to Kent, where unusual numbers of Glaucous Gulls were reported from six counties, while one bird penetrated as far inland as Tring (see *B.B.*, 35, 182, 232, 277). From nowhere else, however, have unusual numbers of Iceland Gulls been reported.

The first Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucoides* Meyer) to be observed was an immature bird seen by T.B. and W.R.P. on Dec. 15, 1941 (see *B.B.*, 35, 207; *L.B.R.*, 1941, p. 19), on the Lonsdale Road Reservoirs by the Thames at Barnes. This bird appears never to have been seen again. The second immature bird was seen by many observers on the river in the neighbourhood of Hammersmith Bridge between Dec. 26, 1941, and Jan. 18, 1942, and again from Feb. 7 to Mar. 23, 1942; between Jan. 18 and Feb. 7 it was not reported in spite of many visits paid by bird-watchers to the towpath. During the periods Jan. 1-18, 1942, and Feb. 7 to Mar. 23, 1942, there were 20 days when observers visited the towpath and did not see the Iceland Gull, compared with 22 days on which the bird was seen. On the testimony of T.B. and W.R.P., who were the only observers to see both birds, the second one was distinctly paler and had pinker legs than the bird seen on Dec. 15, 1941, which was described as coffee-coloured (see *B.B.*, 35, 278; *L.B.R.*, 1941, p. 19). The third bird was an adult seen on the frozen Round Pond in Kensington Gardens and on the adjacent Long Water on Feb. 20, 1942, by M.S.O. and G.C.L., and subsequently by other observers; it was last seen by W.A.W. on Mar. 10; during its stay it killed two London pigeons. What was possibly a fourth Iceland Gull was an immature bird seen on the Round Pond on Mar. 8 by E.P.L. and M.S.O.; this may, however, have been the bird from Hammersmith, which was not actually reported from there on that date, though it was seen on Mar. 7 and 9 (see *B.B.*, 35, 253; 36, 192). Nobody ever reported seeing more than one Iceland Gull on the same day, except I.A.W., who claims to have seen two, one larger than the other, at Hammersmith on Mar. 14; it seems probable that the larger bird was really the Glaucous Gull.

At the end of 1942 an Iceland Gull was again seen on the Thames at Hammersmith by I.A.W. (who thought he also saw another) on Dec. 5, and by many other observers till the end of the year. On Jan. 2, 1943, G.C.L., who four days previously had seen this bird, which was of a rather biscuity colour, identified a second immature Iceland Gull, paler and with a gap in the secondaries. Such a gap had been noted in the second bird in the previous winter, so that the same bird may have returned.

The Glaucous Gulls (*Larus hyperboreus* Gunn.) present a slightly less complex problem. The adult bird was only seen by C.H., on the Round Pond on Dec. 25, 1941 (see *B.B.*, 35, 260; *L.B.R.*, 1941, p. 18). The immature bird was first seen on the river at Hammersmith by E.M.W. on Jan. 7, 1942, and subsequently by the same observer, T.B., W.R.P., and R.W.H. until Jan. 16. It was then not seen again until H.G.A. saw it in the usual place on Mar. 5, and, as stated above, it seems probable that the second Iceland Gull claimed by I.A.W. on Mar. 14 was really the Glaucous. In the interim an immature Glaucous Gull was



seen at the gravel-pits at West Hyde, near Rickmansworth, Herts, on Mar. 1 and 15 (T.B., W.R.P.). Since the gulls feeding by day on the Thames at Hammersmith and on the Colne valley gravel-pits all resort to the reservoirs in the neighbourhood of Staines by night to roost, it is quite possible for the same bird to have been seen alternately at both localities, and T.B. considered the two birds very similar. It is perhaps less likely that the Rickmansworth bird was the same as the immature bird seen at Tring on Mar. 6 (*B.B.*, 35, 232, 277).

R.S.R.F.

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## Communal Display of Partridges.

ON Feb. 14, 1942, in a very large field near Addington, Surrey, covered with tall dry grass, dotted with a few stunted trees, and bathed in sunlight, some thirty Common Partridges (*Perdix p. perdix* (L.)) in scattered groups were running hither and thither over the field, calling loudly all the time. At first I judged the cause of their agitation to be the presence of a Sparrow-Hawk I knew to be in the vicinity, but since they made no effort to conceal themselves, I dismissed the idea. Presently pairs of birds over the whole area started fighting, leaping into the air facing each other and standing so close that they beat one another with their wings.

S. CROFT.

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## Book Review.

*A Handlist of the Birds of the Sevenoaks or Western District of Kent*, by James M. Harrison, D.S.C., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., F.Z.S., M.B.O.U. Witherby, 1942; pp. xviii, 165; 30s net.

The appearance of a new county list or history is always an event, and in Dr Harrison's book we have what is virtually a county list for the Watsonian vice-county No. 16, West Kent, which everyone interested in the birds of the London area will want to read. Unfortunately, its price will prevent many from indulging this wish unless they are able to get it from a library. It is a pity that the work could not have been produced rather less expensively, even if that meant the omission of many of the author's interesting *obiter dicta* on Kentish birds seen in Bulgaria and other parts of the world, and some of the 41 coloured and 27 half-tone plates.

It is over 30 years since the standard county history of the birds of Kent was written by Dr N. F. Ticehurst, so Dr Harrison has many fresh facts to record. The area covered is half inside and half outside the London Natural History Society's area, and the Society's records were drawn on by the author, who specially acknowledges the valuable help received from the Society. Among the many interesting features of the book are the various Continental subspecies which Dr Harrison

has identified as being regular visitors to the Sevenoaks area. These include the Mealy Redpoll, Continental Chaffinch, Continental Goldcrest, Continental Song-Thrush, and Continental Hedge-Sparrow. In the winter of 1940-41 there was a marked influx of Continental Robins in the Sevenoaks district.

R.S.R.F.

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## Bird Ringing, 1942.

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THE Society's returns to the Bird Ringing Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology inevitably show a further slight decrease: 237 birds of 39 species were ringed, as compared with 274 birds of 41 species in 1941. The decrease is entirely due to war conditions, which have reduced the number of active ringers and have led to restrictions on the use of rings. The following table analyses the work of the twelve ringers who took part:

Name of Ringer.	Nestlings.	Trapped.	Total.
T. L. Bartlett .....	5	6	11
F. W. Blake .....	30	—	30
S. Boardman .....	21	7	28
R. S. R. Fitter .....	8	—	8
E. O. Höhn .....	—	15	15
R. C. Homes .....	—	6	6
K. E. Hoy .....	32	—	32
G. E. Manser .....	31	3	34
R. W. Mayo .....	12	—	12
W. D. Park .....	—	2	2
E. R. Parrinder .....	27	1	28
C. A. White .....	—	30	30
J. A. Wigzell .....	—	1	1
Total, 1942 .....	166	71	237
Total, 1941 .....	207	67	274

The most numerous species ringed were: Greenfinch 30, Red-backed Shrike 26, and Swallow 21. It is noteworthy that our total includes 12 Common Buzzards.

Rings are still obtainable, at a cost of 1s per packet of 20, from the Bird Ringing Secretary, R. W. Hale, 6 Grendon Gardens, Wembley Park, Middx., who will be glad to hear from any member interested.

R.W.H.

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### How to Send in Records.

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The Recorders would be grateful if observers would send in their notes with the birds listed in the order of the *Handbook* (not alphabetically or chronologically), and with notes for north and south of the Thames on different sheets, as soon as possible after the end of each half-year (June 30 and Dec. 31). Notes on all species, however common, are welcome.

# BACK NUMBERS OF THE LONDON BIRD REPORT.

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Copies of the *London Bird Report* for 1936, 1937, and 1939-42 may be had, price 1s 6d (1s to members of the Society), from the Recorders, 39 South Grove House, Highgate, N.6, or from the General Secretary of the Society, 91 Queen's Road, Buckhurst Hill, Essex. The Report for 1936 contains a map showing the boundary of the Society's area, a radius of twenty miles from St Paul's Cathedral, which is also available separately from the Librarian, price 2d. The 1938 Report is out of print; it would be much appreciated if Members who have copies of this Report for which they have no further use would send them to the Recorders for file purposes, and supply to scientific workers and libraries.

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## Some "London Naturalist" Reprints.

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|---|----|
| 4. <b>The Thames as a Bird Migration Route.</b> President's Address, 1928. By William E. Glegg, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U. - - -                                  | 6d |
| 5. <b>Ornithological Records of the London Area,</b> Being a Preliminary List of Birds Observed within 20 Miles of St Paul's Cathedral (1928) - - - - - | 6d |
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| 28. <b>The Starling Roosts of the London Area.</b> By R. S. R. Fitter (1942) - - - - -  | 6d |



Supplement to The London Naturalist.

# LONDON BIRD REPORT

FOR  
1943

An Annual Report on Bird-Life within Twenty Miles of  
St Paul's Cathedral.

EDITED BY

R. S. R. FITTER, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.,

AND

E. R. PARRINDER, M.B.O.U.

Price, 1s 6d.

PUBLISHED BY THE

LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,  
THE LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE & TROPICAL MEDICINE,  
KEPPEL STREET, GOWER STREET, LONDON, W.C.1,

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| 32. | A Check List of the Birds of the London Area. By R. S. R. Fitter and E. R. Parrinder (1943) (interleaved) | 6d |

## The London Bird Report, 1943.

IN the fourth full year of war both the interest in and the supply of London bird life have been well maintained. One hundred and twenty different observers recorded one hundred and fifty different species of birds during the year. The main focus of London bird-watching continued to be on the stretch of Thames tideway above Hammersmith Bridge. During the past two years 15 out of the 18 species of duck that regularly visit southern England have been seen on the few miles of river between Hammersmith and Richmond Bridges. During the year 17 different observers are known to have paid 200 separate visits to the towpath, mostly in the Hammersmith-Mortlake sector, on 144 different days. The order of popularity of the months for visiting the towpath was: January, February, October, December, March, November, September, April, May, July, August, June. In the first four of these months, at least one observer was present on more than half the days in the month—23 out of 31 in January.

The outstanding event of the year was the continued colonisation of the blitzed areas of the City by Black Redstarts; three pairs are known to have bred and 16 other singing males were present in places as far apart as Wembley and Purfleet. Other noteworthy events were the attempted breeding of Crossbills on Reigate Heath, the nesting of a pair of Blue Tits in the fork of a tree at Limpsfield, and the occurrence of a Waxwing at Hampstead in December, a Firecrest at Ruislip in September, a Ring-Ouzel at Ravensbourne in April, a Short-eared Owl at Squirrels Heath in April, White-fronted Geese at Beddington in January, a Little Stint at Lonsdale Road Reservoirs in September, a Glaucous Gull at Watford in January, and Iceland Gulls at Hammersmith at both the beginning and end of the year.

A noteworthy effect of the war on London bird-life has been the attractive influence of the static water tanks now dotted all over the built-up area. Mallards and wagtails are often seen on them, and at least two pairs of mallards have bred or attempted to breed on or near these tanks. The wagtail most often seen is the grey. In a letter in *The Field* in February 1944 Mr L. Jones reported having seen a swan, a tufted duck and a greenshank on a static water tank at various times. Another important influence is the thick growth of rank herbage that now covers many blitzed sites in Central London. Several warblers, including willow-warblers and whitethroats were seen skulking in such herbage in the Fetter Lane area on the autumn migration.

The year was also remarkable for the large number of birds of prey, most of them unfortunately not certainly identified, that were seen in or near London. In addition to the Peregrine Falcon definitely identified at Lonsdale Road Reservoirs in December, birds probably of this species were seen at South Norwood in July, over Temple Bar in October, and at Balham in the autumn. A probable Hobby was seen at Limpsfield in

August. Merlins were definitely identified in Kensington Gardens in August and at Aldenham Reservoir in October. Probable Common Buzzards were seen over Ilford in April and October and over the City in June; in such cases it is nearly always impossible to distinguish the Common from the Rough-legged Buzzard owing to the height of the bird from the ground. A pair of Common Buzzards seen in a wood near Selsdon were most likely from the centre in South-west Surrey, where some were released shortly before the war. A pair of Montagu's Harriers was seen near Mill Hill.

In order to economise on space this year's Report includes only very few of the 1943 records for Inner London already published by Dr G. C. Low (*British Birds*, 37, 222).

In response to frequent requests for an up-to-date list of the birds of the London area, we are publishing this year a check-list covering the years 1924-43, which it is hoped will fill the gap until intensive work can be put in on the great mass of records now on the files after the war. Much more observation is still required in many parts of the Society's area, notably S.E. Herts, Essex south of the Southend arterial road, and the whole Kent part of the area. The last complete list of the birds of the London area was published in *The London Naturalist* for 1932.

All the records in "Birds in the London Area, 1943," are for 1943, unless otherwise indicated. The initials following each record show the observer(s) responsible for it. The six counties which come within the Society's area of a 20-mile radius from St Paul's Cathedral are indicated by their initials, viz.: B.=Bucks; E.=Essex; H.=Herts; K.=Kent; M.=Middlesex; S.=Surrey. The following abbreviations are also used in the Report: *B.B.*=*British Birds* magazine; *Handbook*="The Handbook of British Birds", 1938-41; *L.B.R.*=*London Bird Report*; *Res.*=Reservoir; *S.E.B.R.*=*South-Eastern Bird Report*; *S.F.*=Sewage Farm.

The Recorders wish to express their thanks to the following 120 observers who have supplied records or other information during the year, and their special thanks to Mrs E. D. Parrinder for help with entering the records upon the sheets and the preparation of the Report.

(x) = per R.S.R.F.

P. A. Adolph.	L. I. Carrington.	L. R. Evans.
C. B. Ashby.	J. S. Carter.	W. H. Feakes (x).
S. Austin.	K. R. Chandler.	F. Firth (per R.W.).
Miss H. Barlow (x).	S. P. W. Chave.	F. M. Firth (per R.W.).
T. L. Bartlett.	Brig. H. H. V. Christie (x).	J. Fisher.
A. J. Beamish (x).	Miss E. Clerk-Rattray.	Mrs M. S. Fitter.
J. S. S. Beesley.	S. Cramp.	R. S. R. Fitter.
H. Bentham.	Miss M. Curtis.	V. R. Garrett.
T. Bispham.	R. P. Dales (x).	J. S. L. Gilmour.
D. Boatman.	I. Darge (x).	W. E. Glegg.
B. C. L. Boyd.	C. Dolley.	H. G. Gould.
P. A. Briggs (x).	L. J. Dosseter.	R. W. Hale.
F. C. Bromley.	Miss K. Douglas-Smith.	L. F. Harris.
Miss B. E. Brown.	F. Dutton (per J.F.).	Mrs J. Hayes
H. J. Burkill.	K. V. Elphinstone.	(per W.J.L.S.).



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|--------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| R. W. Hayman (R.W.Hn.).  | D. H. Meares                 | W. F. Siebert.              |
| Mrs H. Highway.          | (per H.F.W.).                | Miss E. M. L. Sladen        |
| A. F. C. Hillstead (x).  | Miss R. Meldrum              | (per W.J.L.S.).             |
| F. Hobbs (per R.W.He.).  | (per E.D.P.).                | W. J. L. Sladen.            |
| F. J. Holroyde           | D. W. Musselwhite.           | I. B. Smith.                |
| (per H.F.W.).            | Col. G. S. Parkinson (x).    | M. Smith (per E.McE.).      |
| O. Hook (per J.F.).      | L. Parmenter.                | R. H. Smith (per J.A.W.).   |
| A. B. Hornblower.        | Mrs E. D. Parrinder.         | Col. R. Sparrow.            |
| F. R. Horrocks (x).      | E. R. Parrinder.             | N. F. Stewart (per J.F.).   |
| E. J. Hosking.           | E. W. Pearce.                | Lt.-Col. W. P. C. Tenison.  |
| K. E. Hoy.               | E. G. Pedler.                | A. V. Tucker.               |
| Sir C. Hurcomb.          | W. R. Philipson.             | D. G. Tucker.               |
| J. S. Huxley.            | Rev. C. Q. Phillipson.       | G. H. Underhill (per S.A.). |
| W. P. Jobson (x).        | Capt. G. Wand Piercy (x).    | Miss M. S. van Oostveen.    |
| D. Jenkins (per C.B.A.). | W. S. Pitts (per E.J.H.).    | Dr G. M. Vevers.            |
| Miss L. J. Johns.        | H. E. Pounds (x).            | C. H. Walker.               |
| Mrs H. M. Rait Kerr.     | Mrs M. Priestley.            | G. Warburg.                 |
| Miss C. E. Longfield.    | C. W. Ralls (per E.W.P.).    | Prof. E. H. Warmington.     |
| Dr G. C. Low.            | D. A. Rawlence.              | Miss B. Watson (x).         |
| E. J. Lusty.             | B. A. Richards.              | S. Watson (x).              |
| G. K. McCulloch.         | J. S. Rivers (per W.J.L.S.). | R. Whitlock.                |
| Miss E. McEwen.          | J. Rogers (x).               | J. A. Wigzell.              |
| E. Mann.                 | P. F. C. Rumsey.             | I. A. Williams (x).         |
| F. R. Mann.              | A. L. N. Russell (x).        | H. F. Witherby.             |
| Sir P. Manson-Bahr.      | Mrs P. Rutherford.           | W. A. Wright.               |
| R. W. Mayo.              | R. H. M. Ryall.              | Miss E. M. Wyatt.           |
| A. F. Mitchell (x).      | K. C. Searle (per R.W.).     |                             |

## Birds in the London Area, 1943.

### A REPORT ON BIRD LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

#### **Rook.** *Corvus f. frugilegus* L.

- H. Radlett, coition on ground, instead of as normally on nest, recorded by one pair on Mar. 1 (F.C.B.).
- M. The rookery near Hampton Wick, mentioned in the 1942 report, was not occupied in 1943 (E.W.P.).

#### **Magpie.** *Pica p. pica* (L.).

- S. Mickleham, 25 in one flock, Feb. 21 (C.B.A.).

#### **Hawfinch.** *Coccothraustes c. coccothraustes* (L.).

- E. Much scarcer in Epping Forest and environs than in recent years; maximum c. 30 in Monks Wood on Apl. 4 (K.E.H.). Very few seen in breeding season (K.E.H., W.A.W.), three young birds near Highams Park on June 27 (L.J.D.).
- H. Oxhey Woods, five or six flying excitedly, and calling, about the tops of oak trees on April 21 (R.S.R.F.).
- K. Bickley, one on Apr. 12; Bromley, one on Apr. 7 (R.W.H.). Chislehurst, at least one pair nested (K.C.S.). Shortlands, a pair in a garden in the breeding season (H.H.). Beckenham Place Park, a flock seen on Mar. 10 and in Aug. (J.S.S.B.).

- M. Highgate, two on Apr. 19 and May 2 and one on June 26 (R.S.R.F.). Ruislip, a pair in Park Wood on May 8 (T.B.). Stanmore, one on Apr. 18 (R.W.H.).
- S. Recorded in usual numbers from North Downs; Tadworth, two adults feeding a young bird on June 20 (H.B.). B.A.R. records a cock bird feeding a female at a nest on Wimbledon Common on May 5, 1942; the female came off the nest to receive the food, and while taking it she waved her head from side to side and fluttered her wings like a young bird.

**Greenfinch.** *Chloris ch. chloris* (L.).

- M. Southall, one ringed as adult on 4.8.40 by C. A. White was recovered at Oxford on 14.2.42 (B.B., 36, 235).

**British Goldfinch.** *Carduelis c. britannica* (Hart.).

Noted by many observers from all counties as increasingly common.

- M. Inner London, one flying over Charterhouse Sq. on May 5 (C.H.W.).

**Siskin.** *Carduelis spinus* (L.).

- M. Uxbridge, more than 60 on Feb. 21 (R.H.M.R.). Hampstead Heath, about 20 on Oct. 31 (J.S.C.). Ruislip, some in Park Wood on Feb. 14 and on both sides of the reservoir on Feb. 28 (T.L.B.).
- S. Beddington, a flock on Oct. 10; Botley Hill, two on Oct. 10 (F. & F.M.F.). Merton Park, a small party on birches on Oct. 24 (B.A.R.) S. Croydon, c. 12 males, females and juveniles on hawthorns on Sept. 11 (F. & F.M.F.).

**Lesser Redpoll.** *Carduelis flammea cabaret* (P. L. S. Müll.).

- E. Epping Forest, again scarcer than usual (K.E.H., W.A.W.).
- K. Chislehurst, c. 6 pairs bred (K.C.S.).
- M. Scarcer than usual in winter 1942/3 in Hampstead and Uxbridge areas.
- S. Tadworth area, seven pairs in breeding season; one nest found (H.B.).

**Linnet.** *Carduelis cannabina cannabina* (L.).

- E. A note by K. E. Hoy on display flight appears in the *Lond. Nat.*, p. 7.

**Bullfinch.** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* (L.) ? subsp.

- E. Epping Forest, a party of c. 30, mostly males, at Strawberry Hill on Jan. 23 (S.A.).

**Crossbill.** *Loxia c. curvirostra* L.

- S. Reigate Heath, on Mar. 17 two were watched at a Scots Pine and the female was seen carrying grasses to a nesting site at the top. The pair was seen again at the same place on Mar. 21 (L.I.C., H.B., A.R.W.). Oxted, two on Apr. 8 (K.R.C.). Selsdon Bird Sanctuary, at least two males feeding on Conifers on Apr. 24 (F. & F.M.F.). Tadworth, one on July 11 (H.B.). Epsom Downs, one on Aug. 28 (L.I.C.).

**Brambling.** *Fringilla montifringilla* L.

- E./S. Not recorded from Epping Forest in 1943, though looked for by many observers, and fewer records than usual from North Downs.  
 M. Kenton, a flock of six seen on Dec. 4 were picking seeds from *Achillea eupatorium* (T.L.B.).

**Corn-Bunting.** *Emberiza calandra* L.

- E. Hainault, three on Mar. 11; Romford S.F., one on Mar. 13 (B.C.L.B.).  
 S. Noted at Chelsham Common on May 12, and Epsom Downs on Sept. 19 (F. & F.M.F.).

**Cirl-Bunting.** *Emberiza c. cirrus* L.

- S. Chipstead; a pair nested in the same place as in 1942 (*L.B.R.*, 1942, p. 5) and laid three eggs, but the nest was robbed and the birds disappeared; Bookham Common, a male on Oct. 10 (*L.I.C.*). Boxhill, a female and three young on Sept. 5 (*J.S.S.B.*, *L.I.C.*, *P.J.H.*).

**House Sparrow.** *Passer d. domesticus* (L.).

- M. Strand, W.C.2, several pairs feeding young in drain holes of building in November (*P.A.A.*).  
 S. Richmond, on Apr. 18 a female was seen inviting and accepting coition from two males in rotation. This behaviour was noticed at 11.30 a.m. and again at 4 p.m. (*C.W.R.*).

**Tree-Sparrow.** *Passer m. montanus* (L.).

- E. Nested in usual places in Epping Forest and Roding Valley (*K.E.H.*, *P.F.C.R.*). Flock of 24 at Gilwell on Sept. 24 (*C.Q.P.*).  
 K. Chislehurst, three pairs bred in one tree (*K.C.S.*).  
 S. Small numbers reported in winter from usual haunts.

**Wood-Lark.** *Lullula a. arborea* (L.).

- S. Selsdon, on Jan. 16 a flock of c. 20 alighted in low trees at the edge of a wood (*F. & F.M.F.*).

**Blue-headed Wagtail.** *Motacilla f. flava* L.

- M. Brent Res., one on Sept. 11; pure white chin and prominent white eye-stripe noted (*W.J.L.S.*).

**Yellow Wagtail.** *Motacilla flava flavissima* (Blyth).

- B. Colnbrook, several pairs at Boyers pits and along the Great West Rd. nearby on June 29 (*R.S.R.F.*).  
 E. Nested as usual by King George Reservoir (*P.F.C.R.*, *W.A.W.*). Sewardstone, a flock of 25-30 feeding on the ground on Aug. 21 (*K.E.H.*).  
 K. Nested at Elmers End S.F. (*J.S.S.B.*).  
 M. Brent Res., one pair nested (*E.H.W.*); over 100 in small parties on Sept. 11 and one on Oct. 11 (late date) (*W.J.L.S.*). Inner London, an adult and an immature bird near Moorgate Met. Station on Aug. 17 (*E.G.P.*).

- S. Ham, two pairs bred; one nest was on ground between rows of large cabbages (F.R.M.). Beddington S.F. present as usual in summer, a number of young birds seen on June 26 (C.B.A.). Late date, Wallington, Oct. 10 (F. & F.M.F.).

**Grey Wagtail.** *Motacilla c. cinerea* Tunst.

- M. Inner London, many records from bombed areas and static water tanks in Holborn and the City from Sept. 16 to the end of the year.  
S. Nested unsuccessfully at Ivy Mill Pond, Godstone (J.S.S.B., L.I.C.). Mickleham, family party of five by R. Mole, Aug. 29 (H.B., L.I.C.).

**Pied Wagtail.** *Motacilla alba yarrellii* Gould.

- E. See separate note on p. 28.  
S. Fetcham, H.J.B. again reports this species attacking House-Martins (cf. *L.B.R.*, 1942, p. 17).

**White Wagtail.** *Motacilla a. alba* L.

- K. Chislehurst, a male on April 26 (K.C.S.).

**Tree-Creeper.** *Certhia familiaris britannica* Ridgw.

- E. High Beach, one seen climbing chimney stack of keeper's cottage, Mar. 19 (W.A.W.).  
K. Bird observed going head first down tree trunk to nest at Chislehurst on Apr. 17 (K.C.S.).

**British Great Tit.** *Parus major newtoni* Prazak.

- S. A nest found in a rabbit hole on Walton Heath, May 30 (H.B.).

**British Blue Tit.** *Parus caeruleus obscurus* Prazak.

- S. Limpsfield, on May 30 a nest with eight feathered young was found in a fork of a thick hawthorn tree. The nest was about thirteen feet up where the stem divided into two fairly thick and two smaller branches. The stem was grown with ivy and this partly supported the nest. The nest itself was like that of a Blue Tit when built in a hole and was made wholly of new materials. There was no trace of an old nest of any kind (K.R.C., see also *B.B.*, 37, 55).

**British Willow-Tit.** *Parus atricapillus kleinschmidti* Hellm.

- B. Iver Heath, a pair in Jan. (C.D.).  
E. Epping Forest, one to six seen on five dates between May 2 and July 7 at Connaught Water, Whitehall Plain and Chingford Plain; sexual chase and slight display seen on May 2 and two birds seen on July 4 were displaying freely—wings dropped, slightly spread, tail slightly elevated and back and breast feathers very ruffled and fluffed (K.E.H.). Knighton Wood, several with Great and Blue Tits on Sept. 13 (F.C.B.).  
H.M. Oxhey Woods, one on Sept. 10 and one just across the border in Middlesex on Aug. 5 (R.S.R.F.). Reported as usual from Uxbridge and Ruislip in winter.

- S. Selsdon, two on Nov. 7 and 14 (F. & F.M.F.). Upper Gatton, two on Aug. 13 (L.I.C.). Wimbledon Common, one singing on Feb. 18 (C.D.).

**Great Grey Shrike.** *Lanius e. excubitor* L.

- K. One seen on Mar. 30 in semi-cultivated fields with few hedges between Hayes and Beckenham. The bird was perched on a low sapling and was under observation for half an hour (B.W.).

**Red-backed Shrike.** *Lanius c. collurio* L.

- E. This year only six pairs bred in the central part of Epping Forest; two other pairs nested at Sewardstone and one pair at Chigwell Sewage Farm (K.E.H., P.F.C.R., W.A.W.).  
 H. Leavesden, pair feeding two young on July 24; prey impaled on barbed wire (I.B.S.).  
 K. Ravensbourne, nested in waste field near station (J.S.S.B.).  
 M. Ruislip, five nests found, 19 eggs hatched out of 24 laid; one male was apparently polygamous (T.L.B., see also *B.B.*, 37, 213). Hillyfields Park, Enfield, two seen with a young bird on July 11 (L.J.J.).  
 S. Nested on Ashted Common (one pair, C.B.A.), Bookham Common (at least one pair, C.B.A., L.I.C.), Epsom Common (one pair, C.B.A.), Ham Common (one pair, F.R.M.), Limpsfield Common (at least one pair, K.R.C.), and seen on Mitcham Common in breeding season (C.B.A.).

**Waxwing.** *Bombycilla g. garrulus* (L.).

- M. Hampstead, one seen on a fir near the Heath on Dec. 14 (V.R.G., see also *B.B.*, 37, 213).

**Spotted Flycatcher.** *Muscicapa s. striata* (Pall.).

- K. Shortlands, a pair nested in the top of a street lamp (J.S.S.B.).

**Pied Flycatcher.** *Muscicapa h. hypoleuca* (Pall.).

- E. Chingford, three seen near Hawk Wood on Apr. 24 (D.G.T.); an immature male and female near Warren Pond on Aug. 27 (W.A.W., P.F.C.R.).  
 H. Broxbourne, a female on September 17 (W.A.W.).  
 S. S. Norwood, a female on June 10 (F. & F.M.F.). Tadworth, one in brown plumage seen on September 4 and 5 (H.B.). Wimbledon Common, a male on Apr. 29, 1942 (B.A.R.).

**Goldcrest.** *Regulus regulus* (L.) ? subsp.

- E. Strawberry Hill, one watched singing incorporated in its song the notes of Blue, Great and other Tits, June 27 (K.E.H.).  
 M. Inner London, two in Lincoln's Inn Fields on Oct. 8 (E.H.W.), and one in Kensington Gardens on Oct. 15 (M.S.O.).

**Firecrest.** *Regulus i. ignicapillus* (Temm.).

- M. Ruislip, one in willows by the reservoir on Sep. 18 (W.R.P., see also *B.B.*, 37, 138).

**Grasshopper-Warbler.** *Locustella n. naevia* (Bodd.).

- M. Heard at Harefield on May 4 (W.R.P.), and Ruislip Reservoir on May 15 (T.L.B.).  
 S. Recorded in breeding season from Ashtead, Bookham and Wimbledon Commons.

**Reed-Warbler.** *Acrocephalus s. scirpaceus* (Herm.).

- B. Colnbrook, several pairs present on June 29; one nest found (R.S.R.F.).  
 E. Sewardstone, singing birds present in the breeding season (K.E.H., W.A.W.).  
 H. Oxhey Place, one singing on a small pond in May and June (R.S.R.F.). Stockers Lake, the reed bed has been destroyed and none were seen this year (G.K.McC.).  
 M./S. R. Thames, two singing by Chiswick Eyot and two by Chiswick bridge in latter half of May (C.D.).  
 S. Ham, at least two pairs bred in a small pond at the Gravel Pits (I.D.).

**Blackcap.** *Sylvia a. atricapilla* (L.).

- M. Buckingham Palace Gardens, one singing on Apr. 17 (C.H.W.). Kensington Gardens, one singing in bushes behind Peter Pan on May 11 (G.C.L.).  
 S. Croydon, early date, one singing on Mar. 31 (I. A. Evans, *The Times*, 8.4.43).

**Whitethroat.** *Sylvia c. communis* (Lath.).

- M. Fetter Lane, one amongst tall weeds and shrubs in devastated area on Aug. 25 (H.B.).

**Fieldfare.** *Turdus pilaris* L.

- E. Late date, May 3-27, one at Brentwood (R.P.D.). Exceptionally early date, Aug. 9, two with Mistle thrushes at Chingford (W.A.W.).

**Ring Ouzel.** *Turdus t. torquatus* L.

- K. Ravensbourne, one seen and heard on Apr. 23 (J.S.S.B.).

**Wheatear.** *Oenanthe oe. oenanthe* (L.).

Passage through the area lasted from Mar. 18 (Chingford Plain, Miss Jeffery) to May 6 (Cripplegate, C.H.W.) in the spring, and from July 7 (Wimbledon Common, J.A.W.) to Oct. 2 (seven on Banstead Downs, L.I.C.) in the autumn.

**Whinchat.** *Saxicola rubetra* (L.).

- E. Bulphan, probably nested (P.F.C.R.). No nesting records from W. Essex but considerable numbers passed through Roding Valley on spring and autumn migration (K.E.H.).  
 K. Ravensbourne, one pair nested (J.S.S.B., L.I.C.).  
 S. Late date, one in Richmond Park on Oct. 26 (D.A.R.).

**Stonechat.** *Saxicola torquata hibernans* (Hart.).

- M. Wembley Park, pair with three fledged young on lower slope of Barn Hill on June 16 (R.W.H.).  
 S. Ham Common, a pair with at least four young on Aug. 8 (W.J.L.S.).  
 Mitcham Common, three pairs on Feb. 20 (C.B.A.).

**Redstart.** *Phoenicurus ph. phoenicurus* (L.).

- K. Nested at Beckenham (E. Draper, *Countryside*, Vol. 12, p. 192) and Chislehurst Common (at least ten pairs, K.C.S.), and seen with young at Petts Wood (J.S.S.B.).  
 S. Shirley Hills, a pair with young seen on July 9 and subsequently (F. & F.M.F.).

**Black Redstart.** *Phoenicurus ochrurus gibraltariensis* (Gm.).

See separate note on p. 17.

**Nightingale.** *Luscinia m. megarhyncha* Brehm.

- S. Ham Common, two pairs located during breeding season (D.A.R., F.R.M.).

**Wren.** *Troglodytes t. troglodytes* (L.).

- S. Epsom Downs, May 23, an adult, apparently agitated due to proximity of nest, was seen to move its cocked-up tail from side to side, with a deliberate, not at all jerky, motion (C.B.A.).

**Swallow.** *Hirundo r. rustica* L.

- E. Loughton, early date, one on Mar. 14 (J.A.S.).

**Sand-Martin.** *Riparia r. riparia* (L.).

- H. Bushey, a new colony located; eight holes occupied on May 23 (T.L.B.).

**Kingfisher.** *Alcedo atthis ispida* L.

- E. Chingford, two seen to fly from the top of a willow c. 45 feet high on Dec. 5 (K.E.H.).  
 K. R. Darenth, a nest found on May 2 between Shoreham and Eynsford was c. 5 feet from the ground in a rotten hole at the top of a pollard willow (J.S.S.B.).

**British Great Spotted Woodpecker.** *Dryobates major anglicus* (Hart.).

- M. Lincoln's Inn Fields, one on a plane-tree on Sept. 26 "very angry at a couple of cats" (E.H.W.). Kensington area, seen frequently, but no evidence of nesting (G.C.L. and others).  
 S. Selsdon, one came into private garden to feed on bones each morning in May (F. & F.M.F.).

**Wryneck.** *Jynx t. torquilla* L.

- K. Bickley, a pair attempted to nest but were dispossessed by a House Sparrow (R.W.H.).  
 M. Finchley, one heard and seen on May 16 (E.H.W.).

- S. Limpsfield, a pair had two broods in the same hole (K.R.C.). Chipstead, one pair nested (L.I.C.).
- Little Owl.** *Athene n. vidalii* A. E. Brehm.  
M. Kensington, one calling from trees near High St. Station, Jan. 4 (B.A.R.); one calling loudly between W. Kensington Stn. and Hammersmith at 9.30 p.m. on Sept. 22 (T.B.).
- Short-eared Owl.** *Asio f. flammeus* (Pontopp.).  
E. Squirrels Heath, one on Apr. 18 (R.P.D.).
- Tawny Owl.** *Strix aluco sylvatica* Shaw.  
M. Hampstead, in May, the beaks and webbed feet of newly hatched Mallard were found beneath a Tawny Owl's nest (V.R.G.).
- White-breasted Barn Owl.** *Tyto a. alba* (Scop.).  
M. Inner London, one seen flitting from Mortimer St. down Berners St. towards Oxford St. at dusk on Oct. 7; observer saw white underparts and face (E.M.L.S.).
- Peregrine Falcon.** *Falco p. peregrinus* Tunst.  
S. Lonsdale Road Res., an immature female on Dec. 9 (W.R.P.).
- Merlin.** *Falco columbarius aesalon* Tunst.  
H. Aldenham Res., a male pursuing a Meadow-Pipit on Oct. 29 (E.H.W.).  
M. Kensington Gardens, one seen twice on Aug. 22, flying low between elms (L. G. Duke in *The Field*, 25.12.43).
- Kestrel.** *Falco t. tinnunculus* L.  
M. Inner London, one or two birds present throughout the year, but breeding not established in 1943.
- Common Buzzard.** *Buteo b. buteo* (L.).  
S. Croham Hurst, two watched in wood at close quarters on Aug. 11 (F. & F.M.F.); these had probably come from Witley Park in S.W. Surrey, where nine were released in 1939-40 and three pairs bred in 1941.
- Montagu's Harrier.** *Circus pygargus* (L.).  
M. A pair seen between Mill Hill and Finchley on Apr. 16 (E.H.W.); observer is familiar with the species at Wicken Fen.
- Sparrow-Hawk.** *Accipiter n. nisus* (L.).  
M. Inner London, recorded four times during the year; twice it was seen to swoop on house-sparrows.
- Common Heron.** *Ardea c. cinerea* L.  
E. There were 44 occupied nests at Walthamstow Res. (R.S.R.F., W.A.W.) and 6 at Wanstead Park (W.H.F.), decreases of five and two respectively on 1942; at Walthamstow the gales had blown down several trees and three dead young were found.



M. Herons began to nest in the trees by the R. Thames in Syon Park, opposite Kew Gardens in 1942 (F.D.); in 1943 two pairs nested, one on Syon Marsh opposite Kew Gardens North Gate and one on Taggs Island (J.S.L.G., R.H.S.).

S. There were 7 occupied nests at Gatton Park, compared with 4 in 1942 (G.W.P.). At Richmond Park there were 38 nests, compared with 40 (9 later deserted) in 1942 (D.A.R.).

**White-fronted Goose.** *Anser albifrons albifrons* (Scop.).

S. Beddington S.F., two immature birds on Jan. 16 (C.B.A., see also *B.B.*, 36, 203-4).

**Sheld-Duck.** *Tadorna tadorna* (L.).

M. Hyde Park, one, apparently wild, on the Serpentine on Mar. 19 (C.H.).

**Mallard.** *Anas p. platyrhynchos* L.

M. Inner London, a pair seen on May 5 on static water tank in Harley St., W.1, and an unbroken egg on a board floating on the water (K.R.C.); a pair bred on a tank in Victoria St., S.W.1, and reared two young (G.C.L.).

**Gadwall.** *Anas strepera* L.

M./S. Lonsdale Rd. Res. and R. Thames, by Chiswick Eyot, seen in most months of the year; it seems possible that some migrate as larger numbers are seen in both spring and autumn than in the summer or winter; max. 32 on Mar. 5 (T.B.).

S. Beddington S.F., a pair on Apr. 4 and May 8 (C.B.A.).

**Garganey.** *Anas querquedula* L.

M./S. R. Thames, opposite Syon House, three pairs on Mar. 21 (E.M.W.).

**Wigeon.** *Anas penelope* L.

E. Sewardstone Gravel Pit, seen from Sept. 11 to end of year, max. 28 on Nov. 13 (W.A.W.).

M. Brent Res., 10-20 on Feb. 28 (T.B.); seen on seven visits from Nov. 11 to the end of the year, max. 15 on Dec. 11 (W.J.L.S.). Ruislip Res., a pair on Oct. 17 (T.L.B.).

M./S. R. Thames, by Chiswick Eyot, and Lonsdale Rd. Res., 3-4 seen in Jan. and Feb. and again in Oct. and Dec. (G.C.L., and others).

**Pintail.** *Anas acuta acuta* L.

M. Ruislip Res., three drakes on Feb. 14 (T.L.B.).

M./S. R. Thames, Isleworth, a drake on Jan. 24 (R.H.M.R., for a note on the diving behaviour of this bird see *B.B.*, 36, 201); by Kew Gardens, two drakes on Jan. 28 (T.B.); Chiswick Eyot, a drake on Nov. 7 (I.S.).

S. Lonsdale Rd. Res., a duck on Nov. 27 and a drake on Dec. 27 (J.A.W.).

**Shoveler.** *Spatula clypeata* (L.).

- E. Sewardstone Gravel Pit, eight on Mar. 27 (W.A.W.), a drake on Apr. 3 (W.A.W., K.E.H.), and a duck on Oct. 16 and Dec. 11 (W.A.W.). King George Res., two drakes on Dec. 5 (K.E.H.).
- S. Beddington S.F., two ducks on the pond on Aug. 28 (C.B.A.). Mitcham Common, a pair in flight on Feb. 27 (C.B.A.). S. Norwood Lake, one on June 20 (F. & F.M.F.).

**Tufted Duck.** *Aythya fuligula* (L.).

- M. St James's Park, one ringed as adult by T. Hinton on 14.2.39 was recovered at Rönnskär (Västerbotten), Sweden, on 23.9.42; another ringed on 22.2.42, by E. O. Höhn, was recovered at Besthorpe, Notts, on 26.10.42 (*B.B.*, 36, 238).

**Scaup-Duck.** *Aythya m. marila* (L.).

- M. Since the winter of 1939-40 a tame drake Scaup, doubtless allowed to escape from a private collection at the outbreak of war, has frequented various waters in Inner London each winter, achieving on one occasion the distinction of a photograph in *The Times*; in 1943 it was seen in St James's Park by several observers till Mar. 22 and again on Dec. 29 and 30; a duck was noted in the same place on Dec. 2 (T.L.B.).
- S. Lonsdale Rd. Res., two ducks on Dec. 3 (G.C.L.).

**Goldeneye.** *Bucephala c. clangula* (L.).

- M. Brent Res., a drake on Dec. 11 (W.J.L.S.).

**Goosander.** *Mergus merganser merganser* L.

- E. King George Res., seen in the aqueduct between Feb. 6 and Apr. 6, max. 11 on Feb. 7 (P.F.C.R.). Walthamstow Res., five on Feb. 20 (W.A.W.); a drake on Apr. 10 (R.S.R.F., W.A.W.).
- H. Hamper Mill, one on Jan. 24 (R.S.R.F.). Rickmansworth, six on Stockers Lake on Feb. 20 (T.B.).
- M. Ruislip Res., two on Jan. 27 and 29 (G.K.McC.), four on Jan. 31 and seven on Feb. 6 (W.R.P.).
- M./S. R. Thames and Lonsdale Rd. Res., recorded between Hammer-smith and Kew Gardens from the beginning of the year to Mar. 21, max. 9 on Feb. 14 (E.M.W.), and again in Dec., max. 5 on Dec. 12 and 27 (G.C.L.).

**Smew.** *Mergus albellus* L.

- E. King George Res., two on Mar. 12 (S.A.). Walthamstow Res., present from Jan. 9 to Feb. 20, max. 42 (20 drakes) on Jan. 9 (K.E.H. and others); four (three drakes) on Dec. 27 (L.J.D.). Sewardstone Gravel Pits, a red-headed bird on Dec. 4, the first record for this water (W.A.W.).
- M. Brent Res., 70-80 on Feb. 28 (T.B.); present from Nov. 25 to the end of the year, max. 49 (12 drakes) on Dec. 30 (W.J.L.S.). Hampton Filter Beds, present from Feb. 28 to Mar. 14, max. 22 (5 drakes) on Mar. 1 (E.W.P.). St James's Park, a red-headed bird on Feb. 24 (J.S.C.).

M./S. R. Thames, recorded between Hammersmith and Kew Gardens from Jan. 15 to Mar. 13, max. 10 on Feb. 18 (T.B., W.R.P.). Dulwich, a red-headed bird seen on the Park pond between Feb. 22 and Mar. 2 (L.R.E.).

**Cormorant.** *Phalacrocorax c. carbo* (L.).

M. Brent Res., one on Sept. 4 and 8 (W.J.L.S.).

**Shag.** *Phalacrocorax a. aristotelis* (L.).

M./S. R. Thames, an adult in winter plumage by Lonsdale Rd. Res. on Sept. 17 (T.B., W.R.P.).

**Leach's Fork-tailed Petrel.** *Oceanodroma l. leucorrhoea* (Vieill.).

K. W.E.G. informs us that a female in the National Collection at Tring was taken at Honor Oak Park Station, S.E., on Sept. 13, 1942.

**Great Crested Grebe.** *Podiceps c. cristatus* (L.).

B. Iver, two pairs bred (A.V.T.). Colnbrook, 3-4 pairs present on June 29 but no young seen (R.S.R.F.).

E. Four pairs bred at Sewardstone Gravel Pits (K.E.H.).

H. Aldenham Res., at least three pairs nested (E.H.W.). Hamper Mill, four pairs had nests on Apr. 11 and 2-3 other pairs were present (R.S.R.F.).

M. Ruislip Res., did not breed, for the first time for many years, and not present in breeding season (T.L.B.). Hyde Park, one on the Serpentine on June 22 (C.H.).

S. Bred at Gatton Park (5 pairs, 3 nests destroyed, G.W.P.), Weybridge (one pair, L.S.H.), and Wimbledon Park Lake (one pair, C.D.). Attempted to nest at Godstone (L.I.C.), Ham Gravel Pits (I.D.), and Lonsdale Rd. Res. (G.C.L. and others).

**Black-necked Grebe.** *Podiceps n. nigricollis* Brehm.

M. Brent Res., an adult in moult from Sept. 8-22 (W.J.L.S.).

S. Godstone, one on Ivy Mill pond on Apr. 4 (L.I.C.).

**Stock-Dove.** *Columba oenas* L.

H. Elstree, on May 4, a pair were seen fluttering about each other in a display dance at a height of c. 60 feet and finally flew to a tree where coition took place (F.C.B.).

S. Tandridge, a flock of c. 200 on Dec. 30 (L.I.C.).

**Turtle-Dove.** *Streptopelia t. turtur* (L.).

M. Kensington Gardens, one on July 19 (G.C.L.).

**Common Curlew.** *Numenius a. arquata* (L.).

E. One flying over King George Res. on Apr. 3 (P.F.C.R.) and two at Sewardstone on Aug. 31 (W.A.W.). Woodford Green, heard on Mar. 25 (K.E.H.).

M. On Mar. 29 one was found in Golden Lane, E.C., and taken to the Zoo (G.M.V.).

- M./S. Six flying over R. Thames at Barnes on July 15 (T.B., W.R.P.).  
 S. Ewell, one with Gulls and Lapwings in a field on Oct. 23 (C.W.R.).  
 Richmond Park, heard on Sept. 4 (D.A.R.).

**Woodcock.** *Scolopax rusticola* L.

- E. Havering, one on Apr. 18 (E.J.L.).  
 M. Ken Wood, one seen five times in Jan. and Feb. and again in early Dec. (V.R.G.). Hampstead Heath, one on N.W. Heath in Nov. (Leon Jones in *The Field*, 5.2.44, p. 147).  
 S. Battersea, one put up from the back garden of a bombed house in a built-up area on Nov. 17 (T. W. D. Percival in *The Field*, 25.12.43). Limpsfield Chart, one on Nov. 7 (J.S.S.B., L.I.C.). Richmond Park, one by Pen Ponds on Mar. 13 (D.A.R.). Wimbledon, one on Royal Wimbledon Golf Course, Feb. 21 and Nov. 19 (J.A.W.).

**Common Snipe.** *Capella g. gallinago* (L.).

- M. One was found at Kentish Town in Dec. and taken to the Zoo (G.M.V.).

**Jack Snipe.** *Lymnocryptes minimus* (Brünn.).

- M. Ruislip, three on Jan. 17 (R.H.M.R.).

**Dunlin.** *Calidris alpina* (L.) ? subsp.

- E. Romford Sewage Farm, one on Mar. 13 (B.C.L.B.).  
 M. Mill Hill, between 2 and 3 a.m. on Oct. 18 heavy gunfire at a low flying plane forced a flock of Dunlin almost to the roofs of the houses; their calls "sounded everywhere" (E.H.W.).  
 M./S. R. Thames, one by Chiswick Eyot on Oct. 15 (E.G.P.).

**Little Stint.** *Calidris minuta* (Leisl.).

- S. Lonsdale Rd. Res., one on Sept. 17 (T.B., W.R.P.).

**Common Sandpiper.** *Actitis hypoleucos* (L.).

Passage through the area lasted from May 1 to May 20 in the spring, and from June 26 to Oct. 17 in the autumn.

**Green Sandpiper.** *Tringa ochropus* L.

- E. R. Roding, one near Chigwell on Apr. 26 (D.B., K.E.H.).  
 H. West Hyde, one on Apr. 17 (T.B.).  
 M. Ruislip Res., two on Aug. 14 (T.L.B.).

**Greenshank.** *Tringa nebularia* Gunn.

- M. Brent Res., one from Aug. 24-29 (W.J.L.S.). Staines Res., one on Aug. 31 (F.R.H.).

**Ringed Plover.** *Charadrius hiaticula* L. ? subsp.

- M. Brent Res., one on May 6 (E.H.W.).

**Golden Plover.** *Pluvialis apricaria* (L.) ? subsp.

- E. Abridge, one flying over on Nov. 7 (K.E.H.). Buckhurst Hill, four on Jan. 10 and c. 20 on Dec. 24 (D.B.). Sewardstone, a flock of c. 150 first seen on Mar. 20 had decreased to 34 when last seen on Apr. 17; at least 12 were definitely identified as of the Northern subspecies (*P. a. altifrons* (Brehm)) (K.E.H., P.F.C.R., W.A.W.).

M. Brent Res., one on Dec. 3 (W.J.L.S.). Sipson, c. 20 at Heathrow on Sept. 25 (R.W.Hn.).

**Grey Plover.** *Squatarola squatarola* (L.).

E. Walthamstow Res., one flew over calling on May 17 (L.J.D.).

**Lapwing.** *Vanellus vanellus* (L.).

S. Richmond Park, a pair bred for the first time for about 100 years (D.A.R.).

**British Oyster-catcher.** *Haematopus ostralegus occidentalis* Neum.

M. Staines Res., one on Sept. 10 (F.R.H.).

**Black Tern.** *Chlidonias n. niger* (L.).

M. Staines Res., 12-14 on Sept. 7, staying for several days (F.R.H.).

**Common Tern.** *Sterna h. hirundo* L.

M. Kensington Gardens, one over the Round Pond and the Long Water on May 11 (G.C.L.).

**Black-headed Gull.** *Larus r. ridibundus* L.

See separate note on p. 19.

**Scandinavian Lesser Black-backed Gull.** *Larus f. fuscus* L.

H. Watford S.F., one on Jan. 23 (G.K.McC.).

M. Kensington Gardens, one on Mar. 9 (G.C.L.).

M./S. R. Thames at Hammersmith, small numbers seen up to Feb. 22 and from Sept. 14-Dec. 20 (C.B.A., J.S.S.B., G.C.L., W.R.P.); max. 15 on Oct. 2 (G.C.L.).

S. Wimbledon, c. 10 on golf course on Aug. 30 (J.A.W.).

**British Lesser Black-backed Gull.** *Larus fuscus graellsii* Brehm.

M./S. A few winter records, as usual from the Thames at Hammersmith and at Brent Res.

**Great Black-backed Gull.** *Larus marinus* L.

M./S. Hampton, up to four recorded from Hampton filter bed and R. Thames on June 5 and July 3-17 (E.W.P.).

**Glaucous Gull.** *Larus hyperboreus* Gunn.

H. An immature at Watford S.F. on Jan. 23 (G.K.McC., see also *B.B.*, 36, 204).

**Iceland Gull.** *Larus glaucoides* Meyer.

M./S. The immature bird with a gap in the secondaries seen on the Thames at Hammersmith at the end of 1942 (*L.B.R.*, 1942, p. 22) remained until Feb. 28 (G.C.L. and others). One, a dark bird and probably in its third winter, was seen on the R. Thames and Lonsdale Rd. Res. on Nov. 17, 18 and 25 (W.R.P.); a dark bird seen at Brent Res. by R.H.M.R. on Dec. 18 may have been the same.

**Arctic Skua.** *Stercorarius parasiticus* (L.).

M. South Harrow, one flying over Woodend Avenue on May 21 (T.L.B.); observer noted it "moving more regularly and deliberately than a Herring-Gull. I had a good view. It was an adult of the dark phase, with a splendidly shaped skua tail. As it was moving northwards on the gulls' flight-line, it may have come from Staines." This is the sixth record for Middlesex.

**Guillemot.** *Uria aalge* (Pont.) ? subsp.

S. After a severe storm one was captured in a garden at Limpsfield on Jan. 14, 1934 (K.R.C.).

**Corncrake.** *Crex crex* (L.).

H. Oxhey, seen and heard on the golf links twice in May and on June 25 (M.S.).

M. A freshly killed bird was found in Red Lion Court, Fleet St., on Oct. 11 after a very foggy night (H.B.).

**Water-Rail.** *Rallus a. aquaticus* L.

H. West Hyde, one on Jan. 3, Feb. 20 and two on Dec. 11 (T.B., R.H.M.R.).

**Moorhen.** *Gallinula ch. chloropus* (L.).

M. On Mar. 17 B.A.R. saw a Moorhen walking along the spiked chains across the Serpentine and pecking at a Black-headed Gull on one of the posts until it flew away; the Moorhen then ate something off the top of the post: this procedure was repeated four times, and in each case the Gull gave way before the Moorhen's attacks.

**Coot.** *Fulica a. atra* L.

M. St James's Park, a nest built in the middle of the lake had a dome of sticks which almost concealed the sitting bird (F.M.F.).

**Red-legged Partridge.** *Alectoris r. rufa* L.

E. Recorded from Chigwell, Loughton and Sewardstone in the breeding season (D.B., P.F.C.R.); a covey of 14 at Sewardstone on Dec. 14 (P.F.C.R.) and one of 12 at Theydon on Nov. 7 (K.E.H.).

S. Leatherhead, six on Jan. 24; Epsom Downs, six on Oct. 31 (H.B., L.I.C.). Walton Heath, one on Dec. 25 (H.B.). Chipstead, four on Dec. 27 (L.I.C.).

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### How to Send in Records.

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The Recorders would be grateful if observers would send in their notes with the birds listed in the order given in the "Check-List" on pp. 20-28 (not alphabetically or chronologically), and with notes for North and South of the Thames on different sheets, as soon as possible after the end of each half-year (June 30 and Dec. 31). Notes on all species, however common, are welcome.

## Black Redstarts in the London Area in the Summer of 1943.

**D**URING the summer of 1943 Black Redstarts (*Phoenicurus ochrurus gibraltariensis*) bred in the London area for the 18th year in succession. In Inner London they were present for the sixth successive year and bred for the fourth successive year. Unfortunately, for the second year running they did not breed in the locality at Wembley, where they have now been shown (Calvert *et al.* (1944)) to have nested in every year from 1926 to 1941.

In 1943 three pairs were known to have nested in the City, and some 16 other singing males were present in various parts of the London area, in addition to a number that were recorded only in April and were probably on passage. The three breeding pairs nested at the Charterhouse, the Temple and near Fetter Lane respectively.

The most interesting feature of the distribution of the non-breeding birds was an extension of range downstream as far as Purfleet, Essex.

A detailed list of records follows:

### Inner London.

**The City of London:** 3 pairs bred; c. 8 other singing males.

*Charterhouse*: male first heard, Apr. 18; male carrying nesting material to a hole in a beam socket 30 ft. from the ground in a blitzed building, Apr. 29; one egg in nest, May 5; three eggs on May 8; hen began to brood on May 11; four young hatched by May 31, of which three were ringed on June 11 and one was picked up dead in New Southgate, 7-8 miles N.N.W., on July 26; male last heard on Oct. 2 (C.H.W.). It is not certain whether the family party of six seen in Bunhill Fields Burial Ground on Sept. 10 and subsequently (E.G.P.) represented the second brood of the Charterhouse pair or of a fresh and otherwise unrecorded one; the same applies to two immature birds seen in Aldersgate on Oct. 23 (H.G.G.). At least two other singing males frequented the area between Moorgate and Aldersgate during the summer, and one of these may well have nested undetected. One sang in the neighbourhood of Guildhall from Apr. 19 to June 11 (A.J.B., J.F., H.G.G., G.C.L., J.S.W.), and two were heard here on May 5. On June 20 G.C.L. heard one in front of the Cripplegate Institute, one from Aldersgate Stn., and a third (which may have been the Charterhouse bird) up Aldersgate St. east of Charterhouse. Two were heard at Cripplegate church on July 1 (A.J.B.) and one there on July 29 (P.A.B.). One sang in Moorgate from July 16-27 (A.J.B., E.G.P.). From these dates it seems fairly certain that two or three birds were shifting their song-posts about this area during the summer.

*Fetter Lane*: male first seen, Apr. 1 (H.B.); female first seen, Apr. 14 (H.B.); male feeding one young, June 18 (F.J.H.); male with three young, June 23 (H.B.); pair feeding three young of second brood, July 24 (E.H.W.) and 28 (H.B.); young last seen, Aug. 27 (H.B.); pair last seen, Oct. 20 (H.B.); male seen and heard singing in St Andrew St. nearby, Dec. 3 (W.S.P.). A second male sang in Shoe Lane, May 17-July 29 (J.S.S.B., F.J.H.). What was possibly a third male sang on the Record Office on June 20 (G.C.L.) and July 30 (E.J.H.), but this may have been the male of the breeding pair.

*Temple* : male first seen, May 13 (H.B.); female first seen, May 15 (H.B.); three young being fed in nest under the fireplace on the first floor of a bombed building in Harcourt Buildings, June 24 (M.C.); male feeding two young just out of the nest, June 29 (H.B.); pair with four young, July 3 (H.B.); pair feeding second brood in same nest, July 24 (M.P.) to Aug. 6 (P.A.A.); three young seen out of nest, Aug. 9 (H.B.); dead young found in nest, Aug. 24 (P.A.A.); young of first brood last seen, Aug. 3 (H.B.); young of second brood last seen, Sept. 19 (M.P.); pair last seen, Oct. 10 (H.B.). An unmated male sang in Serjeant's Inn from May 14 to July 2 (H.B.); it was a brown bird, and may have been responsible for the reports of another female in May (W.J.L.S.) and a young bird on June 19 (G.C.L.) in the Temple. A description of the food remains left in the Temple nest after the fledging of the second brood is given by P.A.A. in *B.B.*, 38, 16-17.

*St Paul's area* : at least two males singing; a brown bird sang between Cannon St. and Queen Victoria St. from May 14 to July 2 (H.B.), and two birds were singing near the Cathedral on May 24 (R.W.M.); other records from this area include birds singing at St Nicholas, Cole Abbey, Queen Victoria St. (May 8 to June 27, P.A.B., C.D.), Ludgate Hill Stn. (June 3), Chapter House (May 21-22, A.L.N.R.), Cannon St. Fire Stn. (June 8), St Mildred's, Bread St. (C.D.), Queen Victoria St. (end Sept., C.H.W.) and near St Paul's (Oct. 13, E.M.).

*Mincing Lane* : one singing, May 30 (C.D.).

**Westminster** : one singing male from mid-Apr. to early Aug., and possibly a second male and a female heard once or twice, Westminster Abbey (A.L.N.R.); one on Charing Cross Stn., Apr. 23 (L.I.C.) was probably a passage bird.

**Bloomsbury** : two singing males, one frequenting the Gower St.-Malet St. area, and the other the Red Lion Sq. area; one on University College, Apr. 13 (R.S.R.F.); one on the London School of Hygiene, mid-Apr. to May 10 (G.S.P.); one on the Ministry of Information prior to June 24 (M.C.), and one heard almost daily from 114 Gower St. to July 17 (H.Ba.); the Red Lion Sq. bird was heard from May 24 to June 22 (T.B., W.R.P.).

## Outer London.

### North of the Thames.

*Earl's Court* : one sang intermittently near the Station in May and June (M.C.).

*Fulham* : one singing on a burnt-out garage in New King's Rd. was probably on passage, Apr. 17 (R.W.Hn.).

*Ravenscourt Park* : one singing near the Station on Apr. 18 was probably on passage (J.F.).

*Wembley* : one singing in the Stadium on July 1-2 (R.W.H.).

*Iste of Dogs* : one singing on a wharf at the south end, July 15 (J.S.W.).

*Plaistow* : one singing in ruined buildings, Apr. 27 (P.M.-B.).

*Purfleet* : one singing on a corrugated iron shed, Apr. 20 (J.F.).

### South of the Thames.

*Surrey Commercial Docks* : one singing on June 9 (J.S.W.).

*Wandsworth* : the site where a pair nested in 1941-42 was not visited in 1943 (H.H.V.C.).

Thanks are due to the 47 observers whose co-operation has made this summary possible.

R. S. R. F.



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 CALVERT, G. W., FITTER, R. S. R., and HALE, R. W. (1944). "Black Redstarts Breeding in Middlesex since 1926." *B.B.*, 37, 189-90.  
 FITTER, R. S. R. (1944). "Black Redstarts in England in the Summer of 1943." *B.B.*, 37, 191-95.

## Recoveries of Black-headed Gulls in Inner London.

**B**ETWEEN November 1942 and the beginning of 1944, I have ringed nearly 200 Black-headed Gulls (*Larus r. ridibundus* L.) and recovered 16. In every case except one these hand-trapped gulls were adults, which seems to dispose of the theory that old birds are more wily than young ones. The most interesting feature of these recoveries is not that gulls find their way to and from the Continent, but that day after day, month after month, and year after year the same gulls return to the same mid-day stations. I have some evidence, and am accumulating more, that the gulls which come daily to St James's Park via Buckingham Palace, Hyde Park and the western suburbs do not associate at mid-day with the gulls which feed on the Embankment. The "Park" gulls always seem to know just when and where food is available. Their numbers increase at lunch-time, and when St James's Park was closed during the blitz the gulls also kept away. The following table gives details of some of the recoveries mentioned above, and shows how the gulls ringed at one spot are usually recovered there also:—

<i>Date and Place of Ringing.</i>	<i>Date and Place of Recovery.</i>
c. 1935—Heligoland .....	26.xi.43—St James's Park.
20.xi.38—St James's Park .....	15.xii.43—St James's Park.
14.xii.39—Victoria Embankment .....	1.iii.43—Victoria Embankment.
23.xi.42—Westminster Bridge .....	12.vii.43—Ringsted, Zealand, Denmark.
26.xi.42—St James's Park .....	10.iii.44—St James's Park.
27.xi.42—St James's Park .....	14.xii.42—St James's Park.
	5.ii.44—St James's Park.
2.xii.42—Westminster Bridge .....	15.xii.42—Westminster Bridge.
8.xii.42—St James's Park .....	22.i.43—St James's Park.
14.xii.42—St James's Park .....	12.iii.43—St James's Park.
26.i.43—St James's Park .....	31.i.44—St James's Park.
30.i.43—Hammersmith Bridge .....	16.iii.43—Hammersmith Bridge.
4.ii.43—St James's Park .....	13.xii.43—St James's Park.
9.iii.43—St James's Park .....	9.xii.43—St James's Park.
30.xii.43—St James's Park .....	10.i.44—St James's Park.

T. L. BARTLETT.

## A Check-List of the Birds of the London Area.

By R. S. R. FITTER, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U., and E. R. PARRINDER, M.B.O.U.

IT is now eleven years since the last list of the birds of the London area was published (*Lond. Nat.*, 1932, pp. 81-89), and so many fresh records have accumulated that it is now very largely out of date. In response to many demands for a brief account of the status of birds in the London area (the previous list only stated whether a bird had been recorded and whether it had bred), the Recorders have prepared the present check-list, which gives a very brief summary of the status of all birds observed within 20 miles of St Paul's Cathedral from 1924 to 1943, both dates inclusive. This list is published as the personal responsibility of the Recorders, and not as a corporate effort by the Ornithological Section, because war-time has prevented adequate consultation with other members of the Records Committee, and the Recorders do not wish to prejudice the Committee in any action it may wish to take after the war. It is the earnest hope of the Recorders that at the earliest possible opportunity after the war, the large mass of records now on the Section's files will be properly edited and issued in book form.

In the preparation of the present list, all accessible printed records (see bibliography) have been consulted, in addition to the Society's own record sheets. Only definite records for the period January 1924 to December 1943 have been included. Casual escapes, such as the Ferruginous Ducks that not infrequently turn up from St James's Park, have been ignored.

Status is defined as follows:

*Resident*: Present in the area throughout the year, and breeds.

*Summer Resident*: Arrives in spring, breeds, and departs in autumn.

*Winter Visitor*: Arrives in autumn, spends winter, and departs in spring.

*Passage Migrant*: Occurs only on migration, in spring or autumn.

*General*: Found in most suitable habitats.

*Local*: Irregularly distributed over suitable habitats, and usually found in less than half of them.

*Scarce*: Not more than 10 individuals or breeding pairs in the area at any one time.

*Occasional*: Has been recorded more than five, but fewer than twenty times in 1924-43.

In the case of vagrants which have been recorded five or fewer times, the dates and localities of occurrences are given.

Where a bird is a resident and a summer or winter visitor (e.g. Song-Thrush, Robin), the status of "resident" takes precedence over the

others. Where it is both winter visitor and passage migrant, the commoner status takes precedence. We still know too little of the migrations of the birds of the London area to be able to be precise in these matters.

Altogether 225 different birds are listed below, which is an increase of 13 on the 1932 list, although on account of the limitation of the period to 1924-43 instead of the previous 1900-32, several vagrant species (Raven, Nutcracker, Eider, Grey-lag Goose, Asiatic Golden Plover, Pallas's Sand-Grouse, Baillon's and Spotted Crakes) have been omitted. The 225 species and subspecies are divided as follows:

Resident	...	...	...	73
Summer resident	...	...	...	26
Winter visitor	...	...	...	43
Passage migrant	...	...	...	45
Vagrant	...	...	...	38

In all cases where the status has changed during the past twenty years, e.g. Dartford Warbler, Black Redstart, the status given is the one prevailing in 1943.

To save space, scientific names have been omitted, but the number which precedes the name of each form is the same as that in Witherby's "Check-List", to which the reader who wants the Latin name may refer.

2. **Hooded Crow.** Winter visitor, scarce; not since 1938.
3. **Carrion-Crow.** Resident, general.
4. **Rook.** Resident, general.
5. **Jackdaw.** Resident, general.
7. **Magpie.** Resident, general.
10. **Continental Jay.** Once: Shoreham, Kent, December 1934.
11. **British Jay.** Resident, general.
14. **Starling.** Resident, general.
17. **Golden Oriole.** Four times definitely: Mitcham, Surrey, Apr. 1934; Wimbledon, Surrey, Apr. 1935 and May 1940; Chiswick, Middlesex, Apr.-May 1940; once probably.
18. **Hawfinch.** Resident, general.
19. **Greenfinch.** Resident, general.
20. **British Goldfinch.** Resident, general.
21. **Siskin.** Winter visitor, local.
23. **Mealy Redpoll.** Occasional winter visitor or passage migrant (8 times).
24. **Lesser Redpoll.** Resident, local; winter visitor, general.
- 28/29. **Twite.** Once: Kensington Gardens, Middlesex, Dec. 1925.
30. **Linnet.** Resident, general.
33. **British Bullfinch.** Resident, general.
36. **Common Crossbill.** Winter visitor, scarce in most years, but exceptionally local and even general; bred at Iver, Bucks, 1931, and at Kew Gardens and probably at Ashted, Surrey, in 1936; attempted to breed, Reigate Heath, Surrey, 1943.

40. **Continental Chaffinch.** Winter visitor and passage migrant, so far only identified in Sevenoaks district, Kent.
41. **British Chaffinch.** Resident, general.
42. **Brambling.** Winter visitor, local.
43. **Corn-Bunting.** Resident, local.
44. **Yellow Bunting.** Resident, general.
49. **Cirl Bunting.** Resident, scarce; South of Thames only, but bred at Harrow, Middx., 1928.
56. **Reed-Bunting.** Resident, general.
59. **Snow Bunting.** Occasional passage migrant; all records North of Thames and all except one in November (8 times).
61. **House-Sparrow.** Resident, general.
62. **Tree-Sparrow.** Resident, local.
69. **Wood-Lark.** Resident, scarce; only three records North of Thames.
70. **Sky-Lark.** Resident, general.
75. **Tree-Pipit.** Summer resident, general.
76. **Meadow-Pipit.** Resident, local; winter visitor, general.
79. **Water-Pipit.** Once: Walthamstow Reservoirs, Essex, Mar. 1938.
81. **Rock-Pipit.** Winter visitor, scarce.
84. **Blue-headed Wagtail.** Occasional passage migrant (13 times); bred Sidcup, Kent, 1933.
88. **Yellow Wagtail.** Summer resident, local.
89. **Grey Wagtail.** Resident, scarce; winter visitor, general.
90. **Pied Wagtail.** Resident, general.
91. **White Wagtail.** Passage migrant, scarce.
93. **British Tree-Creeper.** Resident, general.
96. **British Nuthatch.** Resident, general.
98. **British Great Tit.** Resident, general.
100. **British Blue Tit.** Resident, general.
102. **British Coal-Tit.** Resident, general.
107. **British Marsh-Tit.** Resident, general.
108. **British Willow-Tit.** Resident, local.
111. **British Long-tailed Tit.** Resident, general.
114. **Great Grey Shrike.** Occasional winter visitor (13 times).
119. **Red-backed Shrike.** Summer resident, local.
120. **Waxwing.** Occasional winter visitor (10 times).
121. **Spotted Flycatcher.** Summer resident, general.
123. **Pied Flycatcher.** Passage migrant, scarce.
126. **Continental Goldcrest.** Winter visitor, so far only identified in Sevenoaks district, Kent.
127. **British Goldcrest.** Resident, general.
128. **Firecrest.** Occasional winter visitor (10 times); has occurred annually since 1938-39, except in 1939-40.
129. **Chiffchaff.** Summer resident, general.
132. **Willow-Warbler.** Summer resident, general.
135. **Wood-Warbler.** Summer resident, general.
137. **Yellow-browed Warbler.** Once: Sutton, Surrey, Oct. 1930.

145. **Grasshopper Warbler.** Summer resident, local.
149. **Reed-Warbler.** Summer resident, local.
150. **Marsh-Warbler.** Three times: Kensington Gardens, Middlesex, June 1924; bred, Chalfont Park, Bucks, 1931; Middlesex, June 1932.
153. **Sedge-Warbler.** Summer resident, general.
154. **Aquatic Warbler.** Once: Staines, Sept. 1924.
161. **Garden-Warbler.** Summer resident, general.
162. **Blackcap.** Summer resident, general.
163. **Whitethroat.** Summer resident, general.
164. **Lesser Whitethroat.** Summer resident, general.
169. **Dartford Warbler.** Resident, scarce, 1936-38; otherwise occasional winter visitor; only in Surrey.
173. **Fieldfare.** Winter visitor, general.
174. **Mistle-Thrush.** Resident, general.
175. **British Song-Thrush.** Resident, general.
177. **Continental Song-Thrush.** Winter visitor and passage migrant, so far only identified in Sevenoaks district, Kent.
178. **Redwing.** Winter visitor, general.
179. **Iceland Redwing.** Once: Shoreham, Kent, Feb. 1934.
182. **Ring Ouzel.** Occasional passage migrant (11 times).
184. **Blackbird.** Resident, general.
186. **Wheatear.** Passage migrant, general; may have bred, Walton Heath, Surrey, 1941.
187. **Greenland Wheatear.** Passage migrant, scarce.
197. **Whinchat.** Summer resident, local.
198. **British Stonechat.** Resident, local.
201. **Redstart.** Summer resident, local.
202. **Black Redstart.** Summer resident, scarce.
203. **Nightingale.** Summer resident, local.
- 205/206. **Bluethroat.** Twice: Walthamstow Reservoirs, Sept. 1936; Elstree Reservoir, Mar. 1942 (Red-spotted, 205).
207. **Continental Robin.** Once: Sevenoaks district, Kent, winter 1940-1941.
208. **British Robin.** Resident, general.
210. **Continental Hedge-Sparrow.** Winter visitor and passage migrant, so far only identified in Sevenoaks district, Kent.
211. **British Hedge-Sparrow.** Resident, general.
213. **Wren.** Resident, general.
218. **British Dipper.** Once: R. Mole near Leatherhead, Surrey, May 1926.
220. **Swallow.** Summer resident, general.
222. **House-Martin.** Summer resident, general.
223. **Sand-Martin.** Summer resident, general.
225. **Swift.** Summer resident, general.
227. **Nightjar.** Summer resident, general.

232. **Hoopoe.** Five times: Limpsfield, Surrey, spring 1926; Crayford, Kent, Jan. 1935 or 1936; Outer London, Middlesex, Apr. 1934; Totteridge, Herts, Aug. 1936; Enfield, Middlesex, June 1941.
234. **Kingfisher.** Resident, general.
235. **Green Woodpecker.** Resident, general.
237. **British Great Spotted Woodpecker.** Resident, general.
238. **British Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.** Resident, local.
239. **Wryneck.** Summer resident, local; mainly South of Thames.
240. **Cuckoo.** Summer resident, general.
249. **Little Owl.** Resident, general; introduced in 19th century.
250. **Long-eared Owl.** Resident, scarce; breeding definitely recorded only from Darenth valley in Kent (1942), Coulsdon (1934), and Richmond Park (1924-27) in Surrey, Bushey Heath (1925) and Mill Hill (1929) in Herts.
251. **Short-eared Owl.** Occasional winter visitor (8 times).
253. **British Tawny Owl.** Resident, general.
254. **White-breasted Barn-Owl.** Resident, local.
259. **Peregrine Falcon.** Passage migrant, scarce.
261. **Hobby.** Occasional passage migrant (12 times).
262. **Merlin.** Occasional passage migrant and winter visitor (9 times).
263. **Kestrel.** Resident, general.
269. **Common Buzzard.** Occasional passage migrant; definitely identified 17 times; one wintered near Farleigh, Surrey, annually from Aug. 1932 to Dec. 1935, when it was found dead.
272. **Montagu's Harrier.** Twice definitely: Black Park, Bucks, 1929; Mill Hill, Middlesex, Apr. 1943; three times probably.
273. **Hen-Harrier.** Three times definitely: Beddington sewage farm, Surrey, Nov. 1934; Mickleham Downs, Mar. 1935; Staines Moor, Middlesex, Nov. 1940; twice probably.
277. **Sparrow-Hawk.** Resident, general.
280. **White-tailed Eagle.** Once: Navestock Park, Essex, Feb. 1928.
284. **Osprey.** Once: Panshanger Park, Herts, Sept.-Nov. 1930.
289. **Common Heron.** Resident; heronries at Walthamstow Reservoir and Wanstead Park, Essex, Burwood Park, Gatton Park and Richmond Park, Surrey.
297. **Bittern.** Three times: Beddington, Surrey, Mar. 1928; Mitcham, Surrey, Feb. 1934; Ruislip, Middlesex, Dec. 1938.
300. **Whooper Swan.** Once: Connaught Water, Epping Forest, Essex, Jan. 1941.
301. **Bewick's Swan.** Twice: Wanstead Park, Essex, Feb.-Apr. 1931; Staines Reservoirs, Middlesex, October 1935.
302. **Mute Swan.** Resident, general; still semi-domesticated on the Thames.
304. **White-fronted Goose.** Four times: Langley, Bucks, Feb. 1929; Sevenoaks, Kent, Apr. 1939; Staines Moor, Middlesex, Jan. 1940; Beddington, Surrey, Jan. 1943.
306. **Bean-Goose.** Once: Staines Reservoirs, Middlesex, Feb. 1940.

307. **Pink-footed Goose.** Five times: Staines, Middlesex, Jan. 1929; Stanwell, Middlesex, Dec. 1929; Barn Elms Reservoirs, Surrey, Dec. 1938; Beddington sewage farm, Surrey, Dec. 1938; Great Parndon, Essex, Mar. 1941.
- 312/3. **Brent Goose.** Four times: Walthamstow Reservoirs, June 1937; Molesey, Surrey, Dec. 1938; R. Thames by Chiswick Eyot, Feb. 1940 (Dark-breasted, 312); Beddington, Surrey, Mar. 1942.
314. **Canada Goose.** Resident, local, especially E. Surrey; introduced.
315. **Sheld-Duck.** Winter visitor and passage migrant, scarce.
317. **Mallard.** Resident, general.
318. **Gadwall.** Resident, scarce, Barn Elms and Beddington, Surrey, since 1936; originally escaped from St James's Park.
319. **Teal.** Resident, scarce, mainly Colne Valley, and winter visitor, general.
322. **Garganey.** Occasional passage migrant (12 times); bred Elstree Reservoir, Middlesex, 1931.
323. **Wigeon.** Winter visitor, general.
325. **Pintail.** Winter visitor, scarce.
326. **Shoveler.** Passage migrant and winter visitor, local.
327. **Red-crested Pochard.** Once: Walthamstow Reservoirs, Feb. 1924; two other occurrences were probably escapes.
328. **Common Pochard.** Resident, scarce; winter visitor, general; breeds or has bred Osterley Park, Middlesex, and Barn Elms, Beddington, Kew Gardens and Richmond Park, Surrey.
330. **Tufted Duck.** Resident, local; winter visitor, general.
331. **Scaup-Duck.** Winter visitor, scarce.
332. **Goldeneye.** Winter visitor, general.
334. **Long-tailed Duck.** Occasional winter visitor (11 times); wintered at Staines Reservoirs, Middlesex, each year 1932-33 to 1939-40; elsewhere only Barn Elms Reservoirs, Surrey, Nov.-Dec. 1928; Walthamstow Res., Essex, Dec. 1932; Molesey, Surrey, Jan.-Apr. 1938.
339. **Common Scoter.** Passage migrant and winter visitor, scarce.
340. **Velvet Scoter.** Occasional passage migrant (6 times).
342. **Goosander.** Winter visitor, general; three immatures summered on Clapham Common, Surrey, 1936.
343. **Red-breasted Merganser.** Winter visitor, scarce.
344. **Smew.** Winter visitor, general.
346. **Cormorant.** Winter visitor, local.
348. **Shag.** Winter visitor and passage migrant, scarce.
349. **Gannet.** Five times: Wandsworth Common, Surrey, May 1930; Harlesden, Middlesex, Nov. 1934; Barnet, Herts, Mar. 1937; Waterloo Bridge, R. Thames, Jan. 1941; Epping Forest, Essex, June 1941.
351. **Leach's Fork-tailed Petrel.** Once: Honor Oak Park, Kent, Feb. 1942.
355. **Manx Shearwater.** Once: Honor Oak, Kent, Sept. 1930.

370. **Great Crested Grebe.** Resident, general.
371. **Red-necked Grebe.** Winter visitor, scarce.
373. **Slavonian Grebe.** Winter visitor, scarce; not recorded since 1939.
374. **Black-necked Grebe.** Passage migrant and winter visitor, local.
375. **Little Grebe.** Resident, general.
376. **Great Northern Diver.** Occasional winter visitor (13 times).
378. **Black-throated Diver.** Occasional winter visitor (12 times).
379. **Red-throated Diver.** Winter visitor, scarce.
380. **Wood-Pigeon.** Resident, general.
381. **Stock-Dove.** Resident, general.
- 382a. **London Pigeon.** Resident, general; descended from domesticated birds, but feral for many centuries.
383. **Turtle-Dove.** Summer resident, general.
386. **Bar-tailed Godwit.** Three times: Staines Res., Middx., Jan. 1933; Richmond Park, Surrey, Feb. 1936; Brooklands S.F., Surrey, May 1936.
387. **Black-tailed Godwit.** Occasional passage migrant (7 times).
388. **Common Curlew.** Passage migrant, general; winter visitor, local.
389. **Whimbrel.** Occasional passage migrant (16 times).
393. **Woodcock.** Resident, local; winter visitor, general.
395. **Common Snipe.** Resident, general.
396. **Faeroe Snipe.** Once: Shoreham, Kent, Dec. 1925.
398. **Jack Snipe.** Winter visitor, local.
400. **Grey Phalarope.** Occasional autumn passage migrant (9 times).
402. **Turnstone.** Occasional passage migrant (11 times).
403. **Knot.** Occasional autumn passage migrant (8 times).
- 404/5. **Dunlin.** Winter visitor, local; passage migrant, general; one subspecies determined (Northern, 405), South Kensington, Middx., Dec. 1938.
406. **Curlew-Sandpiper.** Occasional passage migrant (8 times).
407. **Little Stint.** Occasional passage migrant (14 times).
409. **Temminck's Stint.** Once: Brooklands S.F., Surrey, May 1936.
415. **Purple Sandpiper.** Three times: Barn Elms Res., Surrey, Nov. 1933; Staines Res., Middx., Nov. 1936 and Nov. 1939.
416. **Sanderling.** Occasional passage migrant (12 times).
417. **Ruff.** Passage migrant, scarce.
421. **Common Sandpiper.** Passage migrant, general; has wintered 10 times.
423. **Wood-Sandpiper.** Occasional passage migrant (6 times).
424. **Green Sandpiper.** Winter visitor, scarce; passage migrant, general.
428. **British Redshank.** Resident, general.
431. **Spotted Redshank.** Four times: Staines Res., Middx., Sept. 1928; Brooklands S.F., Surrey, May 1937; Barn Elms Res., Surrey, Sept. 1938; Brent Res., Middx., Sept. 1938.
432. **Greenshank.** Passage migrant, local; once in winter, Staines Moor, Middx., Dec. 1940.



- 435/6. **Ringed Plover.** Passage migrant and winter visitor, local; one subspecies determined (Arctic, 436), Langley S.F., Bucks, Aug. 1926.
- 440/1. **Golden Plover.** Winter visitor, local: subspecies identified twice (Northern, 441), Waltham Abbey, Essex, Apr. 1941; Sewardstone, Essex, Mar.-Apr. 1943.
444. **Grey Plover.** Occasional passage migrant and winter visitor (13 times).
449. **Lapwing.** Resident, general.
451. **Avocet.** Once: Brooklands S.F., Surrey, June 1932.
452. **British Oyster-catcher.** Occasional passage migrant (13 times).
456. **Stone Curlew.** Occasional passage migrant (10 times).
462. **Black Tern.** Passage migrant, local.
467. **Sandwich Tern.** Occasional passage migrant (18 times).
469. **Common Tern.** Passage migrant, general.
470. **Arctic Tern.** Occasional passage migrant (9 times).
471. **Little Tern.** Passage migrant, scarce; not since 1938.
477. **Little Gull.** Occasional passage migrant and winter visitor (15 times).
478. **Black-headed Gull.** Non-breeding resident, general.
481. **Common Gull.** Winter visitor, general.
482. **Herring Gull.** Winter visitor, general; a few summer.
484. **Scandinavian Lesser Black-backed Gull.** Winter visitor, local.
485. **British Lesser Black-backed Gull.** Passage migrant, general; a few summer and winter.
486. **Great Black-backed Gull.** Winter visitor, local.
487. **Glaucous Gull.** Occasional winter visitor (6 times).
488. **Iceland Gull.** Occasional winter visitor; regularly on Thames at Hammersmith since winter 1941-42; elsewhere only Staines Res., Middx., Dec. 1939-Feb. 1940; Kensington Gardens, Middx., Feb. Mar. 1942; Brent Res., Middx., Dec. 1943.
489. **Kittiwake.** Winter visitor and passage migrant, scarce.
491. **Great Skua.** Once: Staines Res., Middx., Feb. 1931.
493. **Arctic Skua.** Three times: St James's Park, Middx., Sept. 1935; King George V Res., Essex, Aug. 1938; Harrow, Middx., May 1943.
494. **Long-tailed Skua.** Once: Easneye, Herts, Sept. 1937.
496. **British Razorbill.** Occasional passage migrant (7 times).
- 498/9. **Guillemot.** Three times definitely: R. Thames, London Bridge, Nov. 1930; Bunnhill Fields, Middx. (Northern, 498), Dec. 1933; Limpsfield, Surrey, Jan. 1934; once probably.
502. **Little Auk.** Occasional winter visitor (8 times).
503. **Southern Puffin.** Occasional autumn passage migrant (9 times).
504. **Corncrake.** Passage migrant, scarce; probably still breeds occasionally, but only proved, Westerham, Kent, 1941.
509. **Water Rail.** Resident, scarce (Sevenoaks district); winter visitor, local.
510. **Moorhen.** Resident, general.

511. **Coot.** Resident, general.  
 517. **Pheasant.** Resident, general.  
 518. **Common Partridge.** Resident, general.  
 519. **Red-legged Partridge.** Resident, local, especially Essex.  
 520. **Quail.** Twice: Belmont, Surrey, June 1938; Great Parndon, Essex, May 1942.

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## Territorial Behaviour of the Pied Wagtail.

IN the spring of 1943 a pair of Pied Wagtails (*Motacilla alba yarrellii* Gould) attempted to nest in a partly demolished house near the pumping station at Walthamstow Reservoirs, Essex. On the evening of May 5 I noticed the male hovering with rapidly beating wings and uttering a series of shrill notes, resembling the call-note but pitched much higher. Apparently this behaviour was evoked by the presence of a third pied wagtail, which made several attacks on the hovering bird, but each time was driven away, the defender only pursuing for a short distance. Meanwhile the female perched nearby on a low telegraph wire. A cat now appeared and climbed the broken wall of the house. The owners of the territory were obviously aware of the cat; nevertheless two more attacks by the third wagtail were repelled, the second by the female. Finally the third bird flew away and did not reappear. I left the pair perched on the telegraph wire, still in a state of excitement, which was now probably due to the cat, which had apparently settled down for a long spell. A few days later the house was completely demolished, and the wagtails disappeared from the neighbourhood.

I. J. DOSSETER.

# Bird Ringing, 1943.

THE Society's returns to the Bird Ringing Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology show a welcome recovery: 389 birds of 44 species were ringed, as compared with 237 birds of 39 species in 1942. This increase is due to the unusual opportunities of ringing enjoyed by two of our members who are working in the country and to the work of Mr T. L. Bartlett, whose total includes 100 adult Black-headed Gulls caught individually by hand. The following table analyses the work of the eleven ringers who took part:

Name of Ringer.	Nestlings.	Trapped.	Total.
P. A. Adolph .....	—	1	1
C. B. Ashby .....	4	—	4
T. L. Bartlett .....	23	125	148
S. Boardman .....	76	—	76
K. R. Chandler .....	5	—	5
R. S. R. Fitter .....	8	—	8
R. S. R. Fitter and C. W. G. Paulson	4	16	20
K. E. Hoy .....	16	—	16
R. Mayo .....	2	—	2
E. R. Parrinder .....	105	—	105
J. A. Wigzell .....	—	4	4
Total, 1943 .....	243	146	389
Total, 1942 .....	166	71	237

The most numerous species ringed were: Black-headed Gull 100, Stonechat 25, Swallow 22, Red-backed Shrike 21, House Martin 20.

Rings are still obtainable at a cost of 1s per packet of 20, from the Bird Ringing Secretary, R. W. Hale, 6 Grendon Gardens, Wembley Park, Middsx., who will be glad to hear from any member interested.

The following recovery of a bird ringed by members of the Society outside the Society's area has been reported in *British Birds*:—

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER: Ringed at Hereford, 9.7.41, as a young bird by S. Boardman and recovered where ringed, 9.6.42.

R.W.H.

## Back Numbers of "The London Bird Report."

Copies of the *London Bird Report* for 1936, 1937, and 1939-43 may be had, price 1s 6d (1s to members of the Society), from the Recorders, 39 South Grove House, Highgate, N.6, or from the General Secretary of the Society, 91 Queen's Road, Buckhurst Hill, Essex. The Report for 1936 contains a map showing the boundary of the Society's area, a radius of twenty miles from St Paul's Cathedral, which is also available separately from the Librarian, price 2d. The 1938 Report is out of print; it would be much appreciated if Members who have copies of this Report for which they have no further use would send them to the Recorders for file purposes, and supply to scientific workers and libraries.



*Supplement to The London Naturalist.*

*The*  
LONDON  
BIRD REPORT

FOR  
1944

*No. 9*

An Annual Report on Bird-Life within Twenty Miles of  
St Paul's Cathedral.

EDITED BY

The Records Committee of the Ornithological Section  
(R. S. R. FITTER, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U. (Chairman), C. B. ASHBY, R. W.  
HALE, E. R. PARRINDER, M.B.O.U., and W. J. L. SLADEN,)

Price 1s 6d.



PUBLISHED BY THE  
LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,  
THE LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE AND TROPICAL MEDICINE,  
KEPPEL STREET, GOWER STREET, LONDON, W.C.I.

DATE OF PUBLICATION, DECEMBER 1945,

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### SOME "LONDON NATURALIST" REPRINTS.

- |     |  |           |       |
|-----|--|-----------|-------|
| 4.  | <b>The Thames as a Bird Migration Route.</b> President's Address, 1928. By William E. Glegg, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.    | - - -     | 6d    |
| 7.  | <b>The Birds of Middlesex since 1866.</b> President's Address, 1929. by William E. Glegg, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U.       | - - -     | 1s    |
| 10. | <b>Some Diurnal Observations on the Nightjar.</b> By David Lack (1929)   | - - - - - | 6d    |
| 28. | <b>The Starling Roosts of the London Area.</b> By R. S. R. Fitter (1942)   | - - - - - | 6d    |
| 32. | <b>A Check List of the Birds of the London Area.</b> By R. S. R. Fitter and E. R. Parrinder (1943) (interleaved) | - -       | 6d    |
|     | <b>The London Bird Report for 1936-37, 1939-44</b>   | - - -     | 1s 6d |

The above may be obtained from the Hon. General Secretary, H. A. Toombs, Geology Dept., British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, S.W.7.



# The London Bird Report, 1944.

## Introduction.

THE outstanding event of the year was undoubtedly the nesting of the Little Ringed Plover at a gravel-pit in Middlesex. Together with the nesting of two pairs at Tring in 1944, this was only the second occasion on which this species has bred in the British Isles. It was also the first time it had been recorded in Middlesex or any other part of the London area since 1864. Oddly enough, a Little Ringed Plover was seen in August at the Brent Reservoir, where the 1864 specimen was obtained; it is probable that this bird came either from Tring or from the Middlesex breeding locality.

The second most interesting ornithological event of the year was the occurrence in February of a small herd of Bewick's Swans at Ruislip Reservoir. Only twice previously has this species been recorded in the London area, at Wanstead Park early in 1931, and at Staines Reservoirs in October 1935. Two Bitterns seen at Stanstead Abbots in the Lea valley in October was only the fourth record for the area in the past 20 years. Other interesting species observed during the year included a Blue-headed Wagtail at the Brent Reservoir, a Great Grey Shrike on Bookham Common, Firecrests at Ruislip, Turnstones at Abridge gravel pit and the Brent Reservoir, a Reeve at the Brent Reservoir, two Sandwich Terns at Cheshunt, and storm-driven Puffins at Selsdon and on the Thames at Chiswick Eyot. The irruption of Waxwings brought records from four places in the London area early in the year.

Among interesting breeding records may be mentioned five pairs of Black Redstarts in the City, Stepney, Wembley and Croydon. A pair of Wheatears was suspected of breeding near the Brent Reservoir.

Altogether one hundred and twelve observers recorded one hundred and fifty different species in 1944, an increase of one species on 1943. The Records Committee wish to express their thanks to these observers and others who have supplied information during the year, and their special thanks to Mrs C. B. Ashby and Messrs J. S. Rivers and W. A. Wright for help with entering the records on the sheets.

In addition to the usual systematic list, the *London Bird Report* this year contains short notes on Black Redstarts in the London Area in the summer of 1944, movements of Tufted Ducks ringed in St James's Park, late nesting and display of Moorhens, the contents of a gamekeeper's "larder," and the effects of the flying bomb attacks on bird life in the London area. There is also a paper by Mr G. E. Manser on the Birds of Elmers End Sewage Farm, which he studied intensively for three years, and the usual report on the Society's Bird Ringing activities.

### List of Observers.

- |                         |                            |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| K. C. Abercrombie.      | F. M. Firth.               | E. W. Pearce.              |
| P. A. Adolph.           | R. S. R. Fitter.           | E. G. Pedler.              |
| H. G. Alexander.        | V. R. Garrett.             | W. R. Philipson.           |
| W. B. Alexander.        | A. Gill (A.Gi.).           | Capt. G. Wand Piercy.      |
| C. B. Ashby.            | J. S. L. Gilmour.          | W. S. Pitt (per E.J.H.).   |
| S. Austin.              | A. Gould.                  | Capt. R. C. L. Pilkington. |
| C. E. Baker             | H. G. Gould.               | H. E. Pounds.              |
| (per W.A.W.).           | J. Gunn (per V.R.G.).      | B. H. Potter.              |
| Miss H. Barlow (H.Ba.). | R. W. Hale.                | D. Prall (per N.B.K.).     |
| F. J. F. Barrington.    | P. J. Hanson.              | Lady (Dorothy) Pratt.      |
| T. L. Bartlett.         | J. H. Harvey.              | Mrs J. B. Priestley.       |
| C. S. Bayne.            | R. W. Hayman (R.W.Hn.).    | D. A. Rawlence.            |
| A. J. Beamish.          | H. H. S. Hayward.          | B. A. Richards.            |
| J. S. S. Beesley.       | W. H. Hebdige.             | J. S. Rivers.              |
| H. Bentham.             | Mrs H. Highway.            | P. F. C. Rumsey.           |
| T. Bispham.             | E. O. Höhn.                | A. L. N. Russell.          |
| Miss D. M. Braithwaite. | F. J. Holroyde.            | Mrs P. Rutherford.         |
| F. C. Bromley.          | O. Hook.                   | R. H. Ryall.               |
| Miss B. E. Brown.       | E. J. Hosking.             | W. F. Siebert.             |
| H. J. Burkill.          | K. E. Hoy.                 | W. J. L. Sladen.           |
| G. W. Calvert.          | J. S. Huxley.              | M. Smith (per E.McE.).     |
| L. I. Carrington.       | D. Jenkins (per W.J.L.S.). | R. H. Smith.               |
| J. S. Carter.           | W. P. Jobson.              | R. P. Smith.               |
| C. P. Castell.          | Miss L. J. Johns.          | D. Stoyel (per R.W.H.).    |
| K. R. Chandler.         | Mrs H. M. Rait-Kerr.       | A. R. Sumerfield.          |
| Dr L. Cooke.            | B. King (per E.R.P.).      | W. G. Teagle.              |
| S. Cramp.               | N. B. Kinnear.             | H. A. Toombs.              |
| Miss M. Curtis.         | F. H. Lancum.              | A. V. Tucker.              |
| R. P. Dales.            | K. A. Lindley.             | Miss M. S. van Oostveen.   |
| A. Darlington.          | Miss C. E. Longfield.      | Dr G. M. Vevers.           |
| A. S. Diamond.          | Dr G. C. Low.              | G. Warburg.                |
| C. Dolley.              | M. McDonald.               | Prof. E. H. Warmington.    |
| L. J. Dossetter.        | Miss E. McEwen.            | A. C. Wheeler.             |
| Miss K. Douglas-Smith.  | D. C. H. McLean            | R. Whitlock.               |
| Mrs R .M. Duruz         | (per R.W.H.).              | I. A. Williams.            |
| (per N.B.K.).           | L. Parmenter.              | H. C. R. Williamson.       |
| W. H. Feakes.           | Mrs E. D. Parrinder.       | B. Wood.                   |
| F. Firth.               | E. R. Parrinder.           | W. A. Wright.              |
|                         |                            | Miss E. M. Wyatt.          |

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## Birds in the London Area, 1944.

A REPORT ON BIRD LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF  
ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

Compiled by E. R. PARRINDER and C. B. ASHBY.

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FOR an account of the status of all species in the London area, reference should be made to "A Check-List of the Birds of the London Area" in the *L.B.R.* for 1943. In the present report records of species described in the "Check-List" as being generally distributed have for the most part been omitted.

The number preceding the name of each species refer to Witherby's *Check-List of British Birds* (1941), where the full scientific names will



be found. All records refer to 1944, except where otherwise stated. The initials following each record indicate the observer(s) responsible for it. The six counties within the 20-mile radius are indicated by their initials, viz.: B = Bucks; E = Essex; H = Herts; K = Kent; M = Middlesex; S = Surrey. Records on the Thames and its immediate surroundings are put under T. The following abbreviations are also used: *B.B.* = *British Birds* magazine; *L.B.R.* = *London Bird Report*; Res. = Reservoir; S.F. = Sewage Farm.

#### 18. Hawfinch.

- B. Iver Heath, a small flock, probably a family party, on June 14 (C.D.).
- E. Epping Forest, a pair often seen near Connaught Water in April (P.F.C.R.). Highams Park, flock of 40 on Feb. 13 (K.E.H.).
- M. A female seen feeding four fledglings on Hampstead Heath on June 3 (S.C.); two families on Stanmore Common in July (E.H.W.); also recorded in breeding season from Whitewebbs Park (L.J.J.).
- S. Chipstead, hen and two immatures being fed, June 24 (L.I.C.). Up to five recorded from nine North Downs localities from Jan. to June, and once in Dec. (H.B., L.I.C., R.W.Hn., B.H.P.).

#### 19. Greenfinch.

- M. Hounslow, one recovered on Apr. 14, had been ringed at Ewhurst, Surrey, on Mar. 16 (*B.B.*, 38, 28).

#### 20. Goldfinch.

- H. Hertford, two alighted to drink on floating water weed on the R. Beane, June 18 (J.S.S.B.).
- M. Again recorded as plentiful and increasing in most districts.

#### 21. Siskin.

- B. Eight feeding on alders with Redpolls at Shire Ditch, near Uxbridge, on Feb. 14 (T.B.).
- M. Bushy Park, six on alders and birches with Goldcrests and Longtailed Tits on Jan. 1; some on alders and birches on Dec. 21, 25 and 30 (E.W.P.). Uxbridge, up to 26 seen between Jan. 20 and Feb. 28 (T.B., R.H.R.).
- S. Leatherhead, four on Feb. 6 (C.B.A.), and 13 on Feb. 9 (L.I.C., R.M.P.), feeding on alders by R. Mole. Mickleham, six on Mar. 5 (H.B., L.I.C.). Tadworth, seven on Nov. 19 feeding on birches in gardens (J.S.S.B., L.I.C.). S. Croydon, six on Oct. 29 (F. & F.M.F.).

#### 25. Lesser Redpoll.

- E. Epping Forest, about 130 at High Beach on Dec. 15 (W.A.W.).

- K.** Hayes and Chislehurst Commons, present in breeding season (R.W.H.)
- S.** Tadworth, three young in a garden on July 3 (H.B.). Also recorded in breeding season at Wimbledon Common (C.D., R.H.S.), and Croydon (F. & F.M.F.).
- 30. Linnet.**
- M.** Inner London, one over Fetter Lane, Apr. 15 (E.H.W.); c. 10 over Moorgate, Oct. 17 (H.G.G.).
- 33. Bullfinch.**
- S.** Kew Gardens, a party of 15, Jan. 8 (G.C.L.).
- 42. Brambling.**
- E.** Up to 12, usually with Chaffinches, in four localities in or near Epping Forest, Mar. 20 to Apr. 4, and Dec. 21-27.
- M.** Mill Hill, one on Dec. 28 (E.H.W.).
- K.** Hayes Common, one on Jan. 30 (J.S.S.B.).
- S.** One to three recorded in seven North Downs localities (J.S.S.B., H.B., L.I.C., F. & F.M.F.).
- 43. Corn-Bunting.**
- M.** Hanger Hill, a small flock flew over the reservoir, calling, on Sept. 30 (R.H.S.).
- 49. Girl-Bunting.**
- S.** Chipstead, a singing male on Apr. 29, and on June 24 a female feeding two young in a garden, where it apparently had nested; Gatton, a hen on Aug. 5 (L.I.C.).
- 61. House Sparrow.**
- M.** Fetter Lane, E.C., a pair often enters a Milk Bar and feeds among human feet (E.H.W.). At the Central Middlesex Hospital, N.W.10, they can often be seen perching on the beds in the wards and collecting food from the floors; they are very skilled at finding their way in and out of the windows (W.J.L.S.).
- 62. Tree-Sparrow.**
- E.** Nested as usual at Sewardstone (P.F.C.R.).
- M.** Bred at Brockley Hill (F.C.B.); seen in breeding season at Enfield and Enfield Lock (H.H.S.H., L.J.D.).
- S.** Leatherhead S.F., c.200 on ploughed land, Nov. 5 (H.B., L.I.C.).
- 69. Woodlark.**
- K.** Shoreham, a pair with three young, May 19 (D.S.). Otford, one singing on Apr. 10 (J.R., W.J.L.S.).
- S.** Richmond Park, a pair on July 16 (D.A.R.). Reigate Heath, two together on Apr. 18 (L.I.C., B.W.), and one on Apr. 29 (H.B.). Bookham Common, one on Mar. 24 (R.W.Hn.).

**84. Blue-headed Wagtail.**

M. Brent Res., one on Aug. 31; white eye-stripe and chin, with no trace of buff, noted; contrasted clearly with its companions in a flock of 30 Yellow Wagtails (T.B.).

**88. Yellow Wagtail.**

E. Nested as usual at Sewardstone (P.F.C.R.).

M. Brent Res., at least four pairs bred (T.B., W.J.L.S.). Chiswick, a pair on waste land at Duke's Meadows, June 1 (A.V.T.). Feltham Gravel Pits, c.six pairs nested (E.O.H.). Inner London, a young bird on low ruins in Fetter Lane, E.C., on Aug. 26 (E.H.W.).

S. Beddington S.F., c.10 pairs present during breeding season; a practically completed nest found in long grass on Apr. 23 (H.B., J.S.S.B., L.I.C.).

**89. Grey Wagtail.**

M. Inner London, again many records from bombed areas and static water tanks, but not between Mar. 6 and Sept. 27.

K. Eynsford, nest with two eggs, Apr. 21; Keston, a pair frequented the ponds during spring and summer but no evidence of breeding (J.S.S.B.).

**90. Pied Wagtail.**

E. Chingford, a roost noted in rushes at Warren Pond, Oct.-Nov.; frequented by about 20 birds in mid-Oct., rising sharply to 103 on Nov. 2, 264 on Nov. 3 and 148 on Nov. 5, falling again to less than 20 at the end of Nov.; the roost was no longer used in Dec. (W.A.W., P.F.C.R.).

S. Beddington S.F., a flock of c.200 on Feb. 13-14 (F. & F.M.F.). Thornton Heath, a roost in pollarded trees in the main London Rd. (L.P.).

**91. White Wagtail.**

M. Brent Res., a male on Apr. 23 (T.B.).

S. Beddington S.F., a male on Apr. 23 (J.S.S.B., H.B., L.I.C.).

**93. Tree-Creeper.**

M. Kensington Gardens, two chasing each other from tree to tree on Mar. 8 (M.S.O.).

**100. Blue Tit.**

M. Inner London, nested in Lincoln's Inn Fields; pairs often seen in the Temple, along the Embankment, and in Bedford, Torrington, and Gordon Squares (E.H.W.).

**108. Willow Tit.**

B. Iver, one on Sept. 29 (C.D.).

E. Epping Forest, up to 5, mostly in Chingford area, between Feb. 24 and July 8 (S.A., K.E.H., W.A.W.).

- H. Oxhey Woods, heard on Apr. 15 and 19 (R.S.R.F.).  
 M. Highgate, one between Caen Wood Towers and Parliament Hill Fields on Jan. 30 (R.S.R.F.). Ruislip Common, recorded as usual in winter (T.B. and others).  
 S. Selsdon, one of a pair excavating a hole (later forsaken) in decayed elder, Apr. 7 (H.E.P.).

**111. Long-tailed Tit.**

- E. Epping Forest, of a pair watched building on Apr. 16, though both brought nesting material, only one was constructing the nest (K.E.H.).

**114. Great Grey Shrike.**

- S. One seen on Bookham Common by members of the Ecology Section on Apr. 9; also on Apr. 10 (R.W.Hn.).

**119. Red-backed Shrike.**

- E. Nine pairs are known to have nested in Epping Forest (W.A.W.), and three pairs at Sewardstone (P.F.C.R.).  
 H. Totteridge, one pair nested (E.H.W.).  
 M. Ruislip, four nests with eggs found but three were robbed (T.L.B.); also recorded from Enfield, Hillyfields Park, Ickenham, Strawberry Hill and Yiewsley.  
 K. Green Street Green, a male with two or three young, July 22 (F.J.H.). Ravensbourne, one on May 9 (J.S.S.B.). Sparrow Common, one on May 24 (R.W.H.).  
 S. Nested at Beddington Lane (one pair, C.B.A.), Epsom Downs (one pair, J.S.S.B.), and Tadworth (two pairs, H.B.). Recorded in the breeding season at Epsom, Ashted and Mitcham Commons.

**120. Waxwing.**

- H. Rickmansworth, Feb. 26, a party of a dozen or more in a residential road bordered by high hawthorns (E. W. Arnold, *B.B.* 37, 213).  
 M. Hillingdon, Apr. 7, a party of 26 (H. A. Bilby, *B.B.*, 38, 34).  
 K. Bessels Green, up to six or seven between Mar. 8-30 (J. M. Harrison, *B.B.*, 38, 34).  
 S. Banstead, Jan. 8, four (A. W. Moss, *The Times* 25.1.44; *B.B.* 37, 213).

**121. Spotted Flycatcher.**

- S. Tadworth, parties of 24, 35 and 16 seen between Sept. 3 and 8 (H.B.).

**123. Pied Flycatcher.**

- E. Sewardstone, one in brown plumage, on Oct. 1 and 2 (P.F.C.R.).  
 M. Regent's Park, an adult male by the lake, June 30 (K.E.H.).  
 S. Tadworth, one on Sept. 2 and 5 (H.B.).

**128. Firecrest.**

M. Ruislip, Jan. 23, two identified by sight in flock of eleven birds, six of which gave Firecrest call (W.R.P.); Jan. 30, two (R.H.R.); Feb. 1, a pair—male had broad bright orange-red crest and female narrower orange-yellow crest (T.B.); Feb. 20, two, Feb. 27, one (R.H.R.); Nov. 19, three (R.H.R.).

**129. Chiffchaff.**

M. Late date, Oct. 22, Brent Res. (T.B., R.H.R.).

**132. Willow-Warbler.**

M. Inner London, a number of records of birds passing through, including three seen on Aug. 26, with a Common Whitethroat and two Blue-Tits, on plants, especially Sticky Groundsel (*Senecio viscosus*), in Fetter Lane, E.C. (E.H.W. and others).

**135. Wood-Warbler.**

E. Epping Forest, not so numerous as last year: 12 birds heard, two nests found, as against 24 birds heard and nine nests found in 1943 (C.E.B.).

M. Inner London, Lincoln's Inn, one on Apr. 23 and May 7 (E.H.W.).

**145. Grasshopper Warbler.**

E. Epping Forest, one seen and heard on Apr. 23 and May 11 but not on 16 subsequent visits (C.E.B.).

M. Ruislip, heard on May 11—its usual breeding ground has been ploughed-up (T.L.B.).

S. Bookham Common, two pairs bred (C.B.A., J.S.S.B., L.I.C.).  
Ashted Common, one singing on Apr. 15 and 22 (C.D.).

**149. Reed-Warbler.**

E. Sewardstone, bred at the gravel pit as usual (W.A.W.).

H. Oxhey Place, one singing on May 13 (R.S.R.F.).

M. Brentford, heard at Syon House Marsh in breeding season (R.H.S.).

T. R. Thames, again heard in breeding season at Chiswick Eyot and near Chiswick bridge (T.B., C.D.).

S. Beddington S.F. Pond, three pairs nested (F. & F.M.F.).

**153. Sedge-Warbler.**

M. Late dates, Brent Res., Oct. 1 (T.B.), Ponders End S.F., Oct. 8 (L.J.D.).

**161. Garden-Warbler.**

M. Inner London, one seen singing in Kensington Gardens, May 7 (Miss E. R. Glover, *B.B.*, 38, 308).

**162. Blackcap.**

M. Inner London, one singing in birch tree in Lincoln's Inn, May 13 (E.H.W.); one singing in grounds of Winfield House, Regent's Park, June 29 (K.E.H.); one singing in Kensington Gardens, May 7 (Miss E. R. Glover, *B.B.*, 38, 308).

**163. Whitethroat.**

M. Inner London, several seen on passage in Apr.-May and Aug.-Sept.; in late Apr. W.S.P. saw two among the weeds in the blitzed area off Fetter Lane which were apparently carrying nesting material—they did not stay.

**164. Lesser Whitethroat.**

M. Inner London, one in large thorn tree in New Square, Lincoln's Inn, on May 7 (E.H.W.).

**188. Wheatear.**

Passage through the area lasted from Mar. 27 (Keston, J.S.S.B.) to May 5 (Wimbledon, B.A.R.) in the spring, and from Aug. 12 (Wimbledon, C.D.) to Sept. 18 (Brent Res., R.H.R.) in the autumn.

M. Brent Res., may have bred in neighbourhood: one or pair seen between Apr. 15 and May 11, one on June 10 and a young bird able to fly on June 20 (T.B., W.J.L.S.). Inner London, one in Neville's Court on Apr. 24 and May 1 (H.B., F.J.H.); one on bombed site in Fore St. on May 8 (H.G.G.).  
S. Epsom Common, 25 on the ploughed part on Aug. 27. (L.I.C.).

**197. Whinchat.**

E. Sewardstone, one pair nested (P.F.C.R.).

H. Borehamwood, two pairs nested just off the Barnet By-pass; on May 29 a cock was observed in the rare aerial display flight; it rose obliquely to over 50 ft., half hovered, and circled briefly before descending (F.C.B.).

M. Nested at Edgware (one pair, F.C.B.), Mill Hill (five pairs, E.H.W.), Northolt (T.B.), and probably at Ponders End S.F. (three or four pairs, L.J.D.). Inner London, a male in Fetter Lane on Apr. 20 (H.B., J.S.S.B.).

K. Ravensbourne, one pair nested (J.S.S.B.).

**198. Stonechat.**

S. Mitcham Common, two pairs seen in breeding season; one nest found on May 29 (D.C.H.McL.).

**201. Redstart.**

H. Probably nested in Whippendell Woods, two pairs seen on Apr. 30 (R.H.R.).

M. Nested as usual on Stanmore Common (E.H.W.).

S. Nested again in Richmond Park, but apparently decreased due to war-time disturbances (D.A.R.).

**202. Black Redstart.**

See p. 19 for 1944 breeding season records.

S. Woodmansterne, a male on Jan. 31 (L.I.C.). Beddington S.F., a male on Dec. 31 (C.B.A.) was flycatching over the same concrete channel where three were seen in the winter of 1938-9 (*L.B.R.*, 1938, p. 11; 1939, p. 11). Tadworth, one on Dec. 31, 1943 (H.B., L.I.C.).

**208. Robin.**

M. Inner London, Temple Church, one on Nov. 15 and Dec. 1 (H.B.).

**213. Wren.**

M. Inner London, Temple Church, one on Oct. 10, 24, 27, and Nov. 13 (H.B.).

**220. Swallow.**

M. Mill Hill, a pair which bred in an open shed brought off only one young out of three hatched. This young bird was so long (26 days) in leaving the nest that the parents built a second nest nearby, completing it. The second brood, of four birds, was raised in the original nest after all, and took at least 23 days to fly (F.C.B.).

**234. Kingfisher.**

M. Bushy Park, two pairs nested—one pair in the sand-pit which was in use as a rifle range (E.W.P.). St James's Park, one seen over lake five times between Sept. 18 and Dec. 18 (E.O.H., W.R.P., E.H.W.).

**238. Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.**

M. Inner London, one in Regent's Park on Feb. 12 (R.H.S.); one in Kensington Gardens on Mar. 8 (M.S.O.), and Apr. 13 (G.C.L.).

**239. Wryneck.**

K. Ravensbourne, one on Apr. 10. Eynsford, one on Apr. 30 (J.S.S.B.).

S. Limpsfield, one pair bred in a nesting box in a private garden (B.E.B.). Purley, one on Apr. 9 (P. M. Hollington, *Countryside*, Vol. 12, No. 11). Chipstead, one on Apr. 7 and 17 (L.I.C.). Kingswood, one on Apr. 17 (L.I.C.). Tadworth, one on June 4 (H.B.).

**240. Cuckoo.**

M. Mill Hill, a well feathered young bird in Hedge Sparrow's nest on May 27, an early date. The bird had left the nest by June 6 (E.H.W.).

**249. Little Owl.**

M. One seen at Uxbridge on Mar. 30 was feeding on earthworms, tugging them up like a Thrush (T.B.).

**263. Kestrel.**

M. Again many records from Inner London, including the Temple and the City; twice seen to take House-Sparrows.

S. Selhurst, one flew over a football pitch during a match and entered the crowded stand (F. & F.M.F.).

**268/9. Buzzard (species not determined).**

E. One seen over Epping Forest on May 13 (W.A.W.) and again on May 19 (S.A., W.A.W.). One at Sewardstone on Sep. 23 (W.A.W.).

M. Ken Wood, one, being mobbed by Carrion Crows, on Mar. 16 (K.A.L., R.H.S.); Ealing Common, one on Dec. 23 (R.H.S.).

S. Barnes Common, one circling over on June 17 (K.A.L.).

**277. Sparrow-Hawk.**

M. Inner London, one in Kensington High Street on Jan. 25 (R.H.R.), and one in St James's Park on Dec. 28 (F. & F.M.F.).

S. One ringed as a young bird at Limpsfield on July 9, 1943, was recovered at Oxendon, Northants, on Feb. 19, 1944 (*B.B.*, 38, 29).

**289. Common Heron.**

E. There were 49 occupied nests at Walthamstow Res. (W.A.W., K.E.H.) and 9 at Wanstead Park (W.H.F.), increases of five and three respectively in 1943. At Sewardstone Gravel Pit on Dec. 23 one was seen swimming for about five minutes (W.A.W.).

M. Two pairs, as in 1943, nested on Syon Marsh (K.A.L., R.H.S.).

S. There were 5 occupied nests at Gatton Park (G.W.P.) and 36 at Richmond Park (D.A.R.), a decrease of two in 1943 at each heronry.

**297. Bittern.**

H. Stanstead Abbots, two were put up from swampy ground at Netherfield Hall on Oct. 14 (W. Donald Bedford, *The Field*, Nov. 11, 1944). This is the fourth occurrence in the London area in the past 20 years.

**301. Bewick's Swan.**

M. Ruislip Res., a party consisting of two adults and four young was first seen on Feb. 17 and remained until Feb. 28 (R.H.R., and others, see also *B.B.*, 37, 237). This is the third occurrence in the London Area, and the second record for Middlesex.



**315. Sheld-Duck.**

M. Brent Res., one immature on Aug. 12, 19 and 22, and two immatures on Aug. 18 (T.B., R.H.R., W.J.L.S.); a female on Dec. 24 (J.S.C.).

**317. Mallard.**

M. One flew behind a chimney stack, eight storeys above the ground, on the roof of Portland House after bombs had dropped in St James's Park, Feb. 20 (F. & F.M.F.).

**318. Gadwall.**

M. Brent Res., three on Feb. 7 (R.H.R.), and a male on Sep. 10 and 14 and on Oct. 1 and 14 (T.B., W.J.L.S.).

S. Beddington S.F. Pond, one in June (C.B.A.).

T. Lonsdale Rd. Res., R. Thames by Chiswick Eyot, and Barn Elms Res., recorded in all months of the year except June; max. c. 20 on Mar. 8, Oct. 25 and Nov. 4 (many observers). Westminster, two on May 10 (A.V.T.).

**323. Wigeon.**

M. Whitewebbs Park, 15 on Mar. 4 on the Wildwood Lake (H.H.S.H.).

S. Godstone, a drake on Dec. 30 (L.I.C.).

**325. Pintail.**

E. Sewardstone, two at the gravel pit on Apr. 10 (W.A.W.).

M. Brent Res., a female on Jan. 27 (W.J.L.S.) and a pair, very wild, on Jan. 28 (T.B.); one on Apr. 22 (K.A.L., R.H.S.); three females on Sep. 28 (J.S.R.) and one female on Nov. 1 and 5 (T.B., R.H.R., W.J.L.S.). Feltham Gravel Pits, a drake seen on Sep. 23 (in partial eclipse), Oct. 4 and Dec. 3 and 9 (E.O.H.).

T. Lonsdale Rd. Res. and R. Thames between Chiswick Eyot and Syon Reach, a drake on Feb. 3, 13, Mar. 27 and 31 (T.B., R.S.R.F., W.R.P., E.M.W.).

**328. Common Pochard.**

M. Osterley Park, a duck with two 2-3 weeks old young on July 19 (E.O.H.). St James's Park, four pairs nested on the island this year; according to Hinton the breeding ducks, which were unpinioned, remained from those present in the winter and mated with pinioned males, although some wild males apparently also stayed (E.O.H.).

**330 Tufted Duck.**

See p. 22 for note on recoveries of Tufted Ducks ringed in St James's Park.

E. Sewardstone, one pair nested (W.A.W.).

M. Osterley Park, nested (E.O.H.).

**331. Scaup-Duck.**

- M. The tame drake (see *L.B.R.*, 1943, p. 12) frequented the lake in St James's Park until Apr. 1 and again from Dec. 1 until the end of the year. A duck was seen at the same place on Dec. 11 and 16, and on Dec. 18 an immature bird was seen as well as the duck and tame drake (E.O.H.). A duck was noted on the Long Water on Jan. 4 and 14 (B.A.R.), and on the Round Pond, Kensington Gardens, from Mar. 23 until Apr. 25 and again on Aug. 13 and Dec. 2 (G.C.L. and others).
- T. Lonsdale Rd. Res., one on Nov. 27 (T.B.). R. Thames at Hammersmith, one on Dec. 18 (T.B.).

**332. Goldeneye.**

- E. Walthamstow Res., a drake on Dec. 10 (L.J.D.) and an immature male on Dec. 23 (P.F.C.R., W.A.W.).
- H. West Hyde, an immature male at the gravel pit on Oct. 28 (T.B.).
- M. Ruislip Res., a duck from Nov. 19 to Dec. 10 (R.H.R.). Staines Res., two or three on Feb. 28 (T.B.).
- T. Barn Elms Res., a drake on Jan. 30 (B.A.R.).

**339. Common Scoter.**

- E. Sewardstone Gravel Pit, one, probably a duck, on Sep. 23 (W.A.W.).
- M. Brent Res., a drake on Apr. 16 (T.B.).
- T. Lonsdale Rd. Res., a duck on Jan. 9 (B.A.R.).

**342. Goosander.**

- E. King George Res., two on Mar. 4 (P.F.C.R.). Walthamstow Res., one on Feb. 5, five on Feb. 12 and three on Mar. 7 (T.B., P.F.C.R., W.A.W.). Sewardstone Gravel Pit, one on Jan. 22 (W.A.W.).
- M. Hampton, a drake on the Kempton Rd. Res. on Nov. 29, 30 and Dec. 1 (E.W.P.).
- S. Molesey Res., two on Jan. 9; three on Nov. 19 and Dec. 10; 65 on Dec. 17; five on Dec. 28 (W.J.L.S.).
- T. Barn Elms Res., and R. Thames from Hammersmith to Isleworth, recorded from Jan. 1 to Mar. 19, max. c. 40 on Feb. 27, and one to five from Dec. 17 to the end of the year.

**343. Red-breasted Merganser.**

- S. Molesey Res., a drake on Dec. 28 (W.J.L.S.).

**344. Smew.**

- E. Connaught Water, two on Jan. 16 (P.F.C.R., W.A.W.). Walthamstow Res., nine on Feb. 12 (P.F.C.R.), six on Mar. 7 (T.B.); again seen in Dec. when max. was 20 (six drakes) on Dec. 23 (W.A.W.).

- M. Brent Res., present from the beginning of the year to Mar. 11, max. c. 62 on Jan. 6; again seen from Nov. 26 to the end of the year, max. 25 on Dec. 24 (many observers). Feltham, five red-headed birds on small stretch of open water in frozen gravel pit, Dec. 31 (E.O.H.). Ruislip Res., one red-headed bird on Feb. 22 and three on Dec. 23 (W.R.P.). Upper Sunbury Res., present up to Feb. 19, max. 14 on Jan. 1 and again from Dec. 1-31, max. 23 (six drakes) on Dec. 28 (E.W.P.).
- S. Molesey, 17 on Jan. 9, five on Dec. 10, 34 on Dec. 17 (W.J.L.S.). Esher, a few in flight during fog, Dec. 26 (W.J.L.S.).
- T. Barn Elms and Lonsdale Rd. Res., present from Jan. 1 to Mar. 15, max. c. 60 on Feb. 13; 36 on Dec. 24 (many observers). R. Thames, a drake was seen resting on the Middlesex bank opposite Kew Gardens with five Goosanders on Jan. 18 (T.B.).

**346. Cormorant.**

- E. King George Res., one on Aug. 21 (P.F.C.R.).
- M. Brent Res., an adult and a juvenile, Aug. 27 (T.L.B.). Brentford, one perched in a black poplar in Syon House grounds on Mar. 21 and was still there the next day (R.H.S.). Staines Res., two on Sep. 20, Oct. 8 and Oct. 15 (B.K.). St James's Park, one from Aug. 31 to Oct. 17 (T.L.B.).
- S. Molesey, one on Dec. 17 (W.J.L.S.).

**351. Leach's Fork-tailed Petrel.**

The date of the only occurrence in the London Area is Honor Oak Park, Kent, Sep. 1942, and not Feb. 1942 as stated in "A Check-List of the Birds of the London Area" (*L.B.R.*, 1943, p. 25).

**370. Great Crested Grebe.**

- B. Iver, one pair bred (A.V.T.).
- E. Sewardstone, at least one pair bred (W.A.W.).
- H. Aldenham Res., six pairs present, several nests seen (E.H.W.). Hamper Mill, 7-8 pairs on Apr. 14, one on nest on Apr. 21; 10-11 pairs on May 7, but none on nests (R.S.R.F.). Lea Valley, young birds seen on all gravel pits visited between Waltham and Cheshunt on July 21 (W.A.W.).
- M. Bred at Cowley and Osterley Park, and probably at Brent Res. (E.H.W.). Staines Res., 300 counted on Sep. 20 (B.K.).
- S. Nested at Gatton Park (three pairs, G.W.P.), Weybridge (two pairs, A.G.), and Wimbledon Park Lake (one pair, C.D.). At Lonsdale Rd. Res. two pairs were sitting on May 22 (W.R.P.) but the nests were subsequently destroyed in a gale (G.C.L.).

**371. Red-necked Grebe.**

- S. Molesey, one on Nov. 12 and 13 (W.J.L.S.).

**374. Black-necked Grebe.**

M. Brent Res., one on Sep. 12 (G.C.L.). Staines Res., three on Sep. 30, seven on Oct. 8 and eight on Oct. 15 (B.K.).

**375. Little Grebe.**

M. St James's Park, one-four on lake up to Mar. 24 and one-six from Sep. 18 to the end of the year (T.L.B. and others). Kensington Gardens, one on the Round Pond on Oct. 7 and 30 (G.C.L.).

**388. Common Curlew.**

E. Abridge, two at the gravel pit on Apr. 7 (P.F.C.R., W.A.W.). King George Res., one flying over on Apr. 10 (P.F.C.R.). Sewardstone, two on Apr. 21 (P.F.C.R.); one on Dec. 12 (W.A.W.).

H. Broxbourne, one flying over on Sep. 1 (P.F.C.R., W.A.W.).

M. Chelsea, four flying east, 7 a.m., Aug. 27 (R.W.H.).

T. One on Middlesex shore of R. Thames by Chiswick Eyot, Mar. 31 (R.S.R.F.).

**393. Woodcock.**

M. Bushy Park, flushed on Dec. 13 and several other dates (Mr Marlow per E.W.P.). Hampstead Heath, one seen on the Highgate side of Ken Wood in early Dec. (Keeper Gunn per V.R.G.). Ruislip, one in Copse Wood on Jan. 30 and Feb. 27 (R.H.R.), Mar. 4 (W.R.P.), and Mar. 8 (T.B.).

S. Farleigh, one on Jan. 23 (H.E.P.). Richmond Park, one on Mar. 4 (D.A.R.). Titsey, one on June 8 (J.S.S.B.).

**398. Jack Snipe.**

H. West Hyde, one on Feb. 28 (R.H.R.) and Mar. 5 (T.B.).

M. Brent Res., one on Feb. 8 (G.C.L.), one on Oct. 8 and six on Oct. 14 and 15, then none seen until Dec. 12, when one seen and one again on Dec. 23 (T.B.). Ruislip Res., one seen on several dates between Feb. 20 and Mar. 5 (T.L.B., J.S.S.B., R.H.R.).

K. Elmers End S.F., three on Mar. 7 (J.S.S.B.).

**402. Turnstone.**

E. Abridge, one in breeding plumage at the gravel pit, May 25 (W.A.W.).

M. Brent Res., one in breeding plumage on May 11 (T.B., R.H.R., W.J.L.S.).

**404/5. Dunlin.**

H. Cheshunt, one at a gravel pit on July 21 (W.A.W.).

M. Brent Res., three in summer plumage on May 2 (T.B.), four on May 5 (R.H.R.) and one on May 7 (T.B.); one on Aug. 6, five on Aug. 10 (W.J.L.S.), several on Aug. 18 (R.H.R.) and seven on Aug. 19 (W.J.L.S.); seen on Sep. 20 (T.L.B.).

T. One on the Surrey shore near Barn Elms Res., Dec. 31 (B.A.R., R.W.Hn.).

**417. Ruff.**

M. A reeve at Brent Res. on Sep. 12 (G.C.L.).

**421. Common Sandpiper.**

Passage through the area lasted from Apr. 11 to May 24 in the spring, and from July 8 to Oct. 9 in the autumn.

M. Brent Res., on several dates in early Aug. a compact flock of 15-20 birds were seen flying round, calling loudly; this unusual behaviour was most noticeable in the early morning and late evening, but was not confined to these times (T.B.). Ashford Gravel Pit, one was seen in the winter months, after the autumn migrants had left, up to Dec. 9 (E.O.H.).

**424. Green Sandpiper.**

E. King George Res., one-two seen in aqueduct between Aug. 20 and 29 (P.F.C.R.). Sewardstone, seen on six occasions between Aug. 5-19, max. four (W.A.W.).

H. West Hyde, one on Feb. 28 (R.H.R.).

M. Brent Res., one on Aug. 13 (T.B.), three on Aug. 10 and 23 (W.J.L.S.). Feltham Gravel Pits, one on July 26, Oct. 28 and Nov. 4 (E.O.H.). Ponders End S.F., one on Apr. 16 and one on Dec. 17 (L.J.D.). Staines Res., two on Oct. 15 (B.K.).

**432. Greenshank.**

M. Brent Res., one on Aug. 31 (T.B.).

**435/6. Ringed Plover.**

H. Broxbourne, one at the gravel pit, on Sep. 1 (P.F.C.R., W.A.W.).

M. Brent Res., four on May 2 (T.B.), three on May 5 (R.H.R.) and two on May 7 (T.B.); one on Aug. 2 and 3, three on Aug. 13 (T.B.), one on Aug. 18 (R.H.R.), and one on Oct. 1 (J.S.R., W.J.L.S.). Ponders End S.F., two on Apr. 30 (L.J.D.).

**438. Little Ringed Plover.**

M. A pair nested at a gravel pit near Ashford and reared three young; one adult and one young were still present on July 17 but none was seen on July 26 (E.O.H., see *B.B.*, 38, 110-11, for full account). This is the first record for this species for the London area since 1864. Brent Res., one seen on Aug. 3, identified by call note (T.B.), and one on Aug. 6, identified by call note and absence of white wing-bar (W.J.L.S.), may have been from Ashford, or from Tring Res., where two pairs nested.

**440/1. Golden Plover.**

- E. Sewardstone, two on Feb. 19 (P.F.C.R.); c. 40 on Dec. 9, c. 80 on Dec. 10, 40 on Dec. 12 decreased to three on Dec. 14, two on Dec. 16 and three on Dec. 18 (P.F.C.R., W.A.W.).  
 M. Northolt, observed between Dec. 6-16, max. 60 (T.L.B.).  
 S. Walton-on-the-Hill, one on Feb. 27 (H.B.).

**449. Lapwing.**

- M. Inner London, two in Hyde Park, near the Cumberland Gate, 8 a.m. on Aug. 23 (W.G.T.).

**462. Black Tern.**

- M. Ashford, a flock of 16 passing over on a westerly course, and one hawking insects over a flooded gravel-pit at 10.30 a.m. D.S.T. on Aug. 23 (E.O.H.).

**467. Sandwich Tern.**

- H. Cheshunt, on July 21 two were seen flying over the Lea valley, calling; one stooped at a Kestrel (W.A.W.).

**469. Common Tern.**

- H. Broxbourne, one watched hawking over a gravel pit for about an hour on Sep. 8 (W.A.W.).  
 M. Upper Sunbury Rd. Res., one with six Black-headed Gulls on June 21 (E.W.P.).

**478. Black-headed Gull.**

- M. Littleton, one ringed on Nov. 21, 1935, was recovered at Peterborough on Mar. 13, 1944 (*B.B.*, 38, 32).

**484. Scandinavian Lesser Black-backed Gull.**

- M. Brent Res., one on Feb. 7 (R.H.R.); noted each month Aug. to Nov., max. c. 6 on Oct. 1 (T.B.). Ashford Gravel Pits, c. 3 on Aug. 8 and Aug. 23 (E.O.H.). Kensington Gardens, at least one on Oct. 17 (G.C.L.). Hyde Park, one on Nov. 6 and 8 (A.V.T.).  
 T. Lonsdale Rd. Res. and R. Thames at Hammersmith, one to three up to Apr. 27 and on Nov. 18, 21 and 25 (C.B.A., T.B., R.H.S., A.V.T.). Westminster, two on Oct. 23 (C.B.A.)

**485. British Lesser Black-backed Gull.**

- T. Lonsdale Rd. Res. and R. Thames at Hammersmith: status as passage migrant maintained in spring and autumn (max. 32 on Aug. 28) and two to three recorded as usual in winter.

**486. Great Black-backed Gull.**

- M./S. Up to four recorded on many occasions at Upper Sunbury Rd. Res. and over R. Thames in nearly every month in the year, including summer months (E.W.P.).

**487/8. Glaucous and Iceland Gulls.**

T. [Gulls which, by their large size and absence of black on the primaries, were either Glaucous or Iceland Gulls have again been recorded from the Thames at Hammersmith. Two examples thought to be Iceland Gulls were seen in January and February; in December a heavily-built, big-winged bird was watched for long periods and considered to be a Glaucous. Puzzling variations in size and field characters have been noted in Glaucous/Iceland Gulls and an investigation into the field identification of these species is proceeding. The conclusions will be published in the *L.B.R.* for 1945 (C.B.A., T.B., W.R.P. and others).]

**489. Kittiwake.**

M. Brent Res., an adult on Feb. 12 (T.B.); an adult, mobbing a Kestrel, and calling, on Oct. 21 (J.S.R.), and an adult on Nov. 4 (T.B.).

**503. Puffin.**

S. Selsdon, Feb. 19, one found, dead, crouched against the exposed roots of an old yew bordering a woodland path. The bird was in a fresh condition, though somewhat emaciated. The weather at the time was bitterly cold with strong north-easterly winds and intermittent snow showers (H.E.P., see also *B.B.*, 38, 59).

T. An immature bird on R. Thames at Chiswick Eyot on Jan. 3; the weather was mild with high south-west wind (T.B., W.R.P., see also *B.B.*, 37, 218).

**504. Corncrake.**

H. Oxhey, one heard from corn-field adjoining golf course on May 26 (M.S.).

K. Heard calling at Ravensbourne on May 26 (J.S.S.B.), and at Westerham on June 8 (P.A.A.).

**509. Water-Rail.**

B. Iver, two seen to swim across stream into thick reeds on Jan. 10 (A.V.T.).

E. Sewardstone Gravel Pit, one on Feb. 26, May 12 and Dec. 23 (W.A.W.).

H. West Hyde, one on Jan. 23 and 24 (R.H.R.), Jan. 30 (J.S.S.B.), Mar. 5 (T.B.) and Mar. 26 (J.S.S.B.).

M. Harefield, one on Jan. 13 (T.L.B.). Paddington, one picked up on Nov. 28 and taken to Zoo (G.C.L.).

S. Beddington S.F. Pond, one on Dec. 10 (C.B.A.).

**510. Moorhen.**

See p. 22 for note on late nesting and display of this species.

- E. A pair feeding with poultry in a private garden at Woodford Green on Feb. 12 were seen for a week and then disappeared (W.P.J.).
- M. On May 23, in The Dell, Hyde Park, an adult Moorhen was seen to rush at a Brown Rat, which had wandered too near its young, and chase it with outstretched wings and neck. The rat ran into a thick clump of reeds (A.V.T.). Portland House, one flew behind a chimney stack, eight storeys above the ground, after bombs had been dropped in St James's Park, Feb. 20 (F. & F.M.F.).
- 517. Pheasant.**
- M. Inner London, a female was flushed from a bombed basement, overgrown with weeds, near Temple Church on Nov. 13 (H.B.).
- 518. Common Partridge.**
- S. Has increased in Richmond Park coincident with ploughing up of considerable areas as a war measure (D.A.R.).
- 519. Red-Legged Partridge.**
- E. Small coveys seen at Sewardstone and High Beach in the autumn and winter (P.F.C.R., W.A.W.).
- M. Brent Res., one seen at close quarters on May 7 (T.B.).
- K. Park Langley, two pairs on May 2 (J.S.S.B.).
- S. Beddington S.F., two on Apr. 30 (C.B.A.). Walton Heath, one on May 20 (H.B.).

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## Contents of a Gamekeeper's "Larder."

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**A** GAMEKEEPER'S "larder" found in Bayfordbury Park, Herts., on June 25 contained the following birds and mammals:—

18 Carrion Crows.	4 Sparrow Hawks.
5 Magpies.	1 Heron.
5 Jays.	14 Weasels and Stoats.
10 Little Owls.	3 Grey Squirrels.
11 Kestrels.	1 Red Squirrel.

P. J. HANSON. MISS L. J. JOHNS.



## Black Redstarts in the London Area in the Summer of 1944.

IN 1944 Black Redstarts (*Phoenicurus ochrurus gibraltariensis*) bred in the London area for the 19th, and in Inner London for the 5th, successive year. Three pairs are known to have nested in Inner London, one in the Temple, one in the Guildhall-Cripplegate area, and one in Stepney. In addition a pair nested at Croydon and one pair returned to breed at the Wembley site where three pairs nested in every year from 1926 to 1941. The year was marked by a considerable reduction in the number of non-breeding males recorded singing, both in the County of London and elsewhere in the London area.

A detailed list of records follows :

### Inner London.

**The City of London:** at least 2 pairs bred; at least 5 other singing males present.

*Temple* : 1, possibly 2, pairs bred.

Apr. 4, male, with indistinct white wing-patches, first seen by H. Bentham, who did not hear a second male singing in spite of many visits throughout the season.

Apr. 22, female first seen (H.B.).

May 20, two females seen, one on Harcourt Buildings and the other with a male east of the Temple church (E. H. Warmington).

June 3, pair carrying food into building near church (H.B.); two males singing, one in each of the places where females were seen on May 20 (E.H.W.).

June 9, pair feeding two young which appeared to have been out of the nest for 2-3 days (H.B.).

June 11, one feeding young in a nest near the church (O Hook); this was subsequently verified by H.B. as the same nest to which he saw the birds flying on June 3, and also as a site that had been prospected by the pair that bred in the Temple in 1943; also on June 11 H.B. saw four young birds out of the nest, so that if there was only one brood, either the remaining young left after O.H. visited the site, or at least one young bird was left in the nest after the first four had flown.

June 17, pair with 3 young on Harcourt Buildings (E.H.W.).

July 2, cock with prominent white wing-patch seen, also (separately) a hen with two young (G. C. Low).

July 7, cock with white wing-patch carrying food to young in nest in hole in wall of Inner Temple Hall (A. S. Diamond).

July 20, cock in attendance on four young, which appeared to have left the nest only a day or two previously, near the church; hen not seen again (H.B.).

July 29, cock and young last seen in Temple (H.B.). See under Fetter Lane for subsequent records.

Sept. 20-23, cock seen (H.B.).

Sept. 26, cock singing (E. G. Pedler).

Oct. 1, one (? cock) calling (E.H.W.).

Oct. 5, cock seen for first time since Sept. 23, though daily visits paid in between (H.B.).

Oct. 16-17, male with prominent white wing-patches, like the unmated Fetter Lane bird seen; this was quite different from the cocks seen on Sept. 20-23, and Oct. 5 (H.B.).

It is hard to draw any definite conclusions from the evidence respecting the Temple black redstarts in 1944, apart from the fact that two broods were reared. It seems most probable that only one pair actually nested, the few other adults seen having wandered in from other areas; this would account for the extra cock and hen seen by E.H.W. on May 20 and June 3, especially as H.B., in many visits, never heard two singing, which he could hardly have failed to do if two cocks had been singing regularly. Conflicts over the conspicuousness of the white patches on the cocks' wings may be accounted for largely by differences of opinion as to what constitutes conspicuousness. As regards the crucial date of June 11, the evidence is consistent with the existence of either one or two broods on that date, so that we are not entitled to assume more than one. Part of the confusion over numbers in 1944 is due to the interchange between the Temple and Fetter Lane areas that seems to have occurred throughout the season.

*Fetter Lane area* : at least one singing male.

March 31, cock first seen, remaining in the area till Oct. 10, never being accompanied by a hen (H.B.); this was probably the same bird which nested in the area in 1943, as it occupied precisely the same area and song-posts, and was similarly remarkable for its very prominent white wing-patches.

Apr. 27-28, a second cock was repeatedly chased by the resident cock, and was not seen again (H.B.).

May 7, a second cock singing (G.C.L.).

June 4, possibly two additional cocks singing (G.C.L.).

June 14, possibly a second cock singing (T. Bispham).

June 25, a second cock singing (G.C.L.).

July 2, a cock without a white wing-patch seen (G.C.L.).

July 4, hen or young bird seen (F. J. Holroyde).

Aug. 1-2, cock feeding two young was almost certainly from the Temple, where it was not seen after July 29 (H.B.).

Aug. 15, pair with three young, also seen with two young on 19th and 24th (E.H.W.).

Sept., birds, old and young, often recorded throughout this month, late Aug. and early Oct.

Oct. 1, two whole families seen, two pairs with three young each (E.H.W.).

Oct. 10, a family party on same day as another seen in the Temple (E.H.W.); this was the last time a hen bird was seen.

Oct. 11, two cocks singing against each other before sunrise (E.H.W.).

Oct. 14, young last seen (F.J.H.).

Oct. 24, cock last seen (E.H.W.).

It appears almost certain that no pair bred in this area in 1944. The first family party to appear was pretty certainly from the Temple, and the second may well have come from the Cripplegate area. The irregular appearance of a second cock during the summer may merely have represented incursions by the Temple cock. On the other hand there may have been a third roving cock in the whole area between the Embankment and High Holborn.

*Guildhall-Cripplegate area* : one pair bred; at least two other singing males present.

First heard singing, Apr. 28 (H. G. Gould); pair in Cripplegate churchyard, May 23 (A. V. Tucker); hen with food, London Wall, June 8 (H.G.G.); two males singing, two young out of nest, Basinghall St., June 10 (R.S.R.F.); three cocks singing, two young, Basinghall St., June 11 (W. J. L. Sladen); three singing cocks also on June 19 (R.S.R.F.); cock feeding one young, London Wall, Aug. 1 (H.G.G.); one singing near Cripplegate church, Sept. 9 (K. Douglas Smith); cock last seen, Oct. 31 (H.G.G.).

*St Paul's Cathedral area* : cock seen or heard near St Paul's or in Cannon St. four times between June 6 and Aug. 14 (H.B., F.J.H., G.C.L.).

*Mincing Lane* : one singing on Apr. 29 (K. C. Abercrombie) was evidently on passage.

**Westminster**: the only record for the year was of a pair, evidently on passage, in the garden of Carlton House Terrace on March 23 (C. S. Bayne).

**Holborn**: the only record for the year was of a cock, lacking white wing-patches, which sang in the area between Red Lion Square and the south end of Bedford Row from June 28 to Aug. 16 (F.J.H.).

**Stepney**: one pair nested.

A pair frequented the immediate vicinity of the heavily damaged John Knox church in Stepney Way (formerly Oxford St.) from the end of April. The cock often sang from the top of the spire till a flying bomb landed near the church on June 17, and further damaged it. After this the birds were not seen for ten days, but early in July the cock was again seen on the church tower (the conical spire of which had in the meantime been removed), and was twice noticed carrying food in the first week of July towards inaccessible bombed property north of the church. Three young birds were seen on July 19. Neither parent nor young were seen after July 25, possibly on account of further damage to the area by bombing on July 28 (A. Darlington).

**Poplar**: a "brown" cock with an ill-developed wing-patch was singing on Cahir Street School, off West Ferry Rd., on June 16. Though the area was visited several times subsequently, neither this nor any other bird was seen or heard (A.D.).

### Outer London.

**Croydon**: a pair feeding young just out of the nest among ruined buildings by the Aerodrome, July 10 (D. C. H. McLean).

**Edmonton**: a cock with a slight wing-patch was singing in a timber-yard on the east side of the Lea Navigation near Angel Road, N.18, on June 11; on June 18 there was no sign of this bird; on Oct. 29 an immature or hen bird, and on Dec. 3 and 10 a rather darker bird than the October one, were seen in the same place (L. J. Dosseter).

**Wembley**: one pair nested on the usual ledge above one of the main gates of the Palace of Engineering, and brought off one brood; at the beginning of August, when the young birds were fairly well on the wing, a flying bomb destroyed the nesting site (G. W. Calvert). One was singing from the flagstaff on the Empire Pool, May 28 (R. W. Hale).

Thanks are due to the 32 observers whose co-operation has made this report possible.

R. S. R. FITTER.

## Movements of Tufted Ducks Ringed in St James's Park.

THE following list of Tufted Ducks (*Aythya fuligula* (L.)) ringed in St James's Park and recovered either there or elsewhere gives some indication of the movements of these winter visitors to Central London :

Date of Ringing in St James's Park.	Date of Recovery.	Place of Recovery.
17.i.34	— .vii.35	Walthamstow, Essex.
17.i.34	23.i.43	St James's Park.
9.ii.35	28.xii.37	Paddington, London.
14.ii.39	23.ix.42	Rönnskär, Västeerbotten, Sweden.
21.ii.42	16.i.44	Staines, Middlesex.
22.ii.42	26.x.42	Besthorpe, Notts.
22.ii.42	29.x.42	St James's Park.
2.iii.42	26.xi.43	St James's Park.
	7.iii.44	St James's Park.
17.iii.42	16.iii.43	Vincent Square, Westminster (balloon cable).
2.ii.43	— .v.43	Novaya Zemlya.
29.xii.43	16.iv.44	Nykoping, Sweden.
18.ii.44	2.xi.44	St James's Park.
12.vii.44	9.x.44	St James's Park.

T. L. BARTLETT.

## Late Nesting and Display of Moorhens.

A PAIR of Moorhens (*Gallinula c. chloropus* (L.)), whose nesting cycle had evidently been disturbed, hatched two eggs on the Vale of Health Pond on September 9. One chick survived, was reared, and was still alive at the end of December. The chick was still being brooded by the female on the nest on September 30. On October 1 the male was building up the nest, clucking and giving every indication of nesting fever. On October 8 the chick was still escorted by the female, but by October 15 it had become independent, though it still kept near its parents. On October 22 the male was displaying and the female was responding; the young bird, which was nearby, appeared to be mystified and cheeped loudly. My observations were interrupted at this point, but on resuming them in December I found the male still making advances to the female, who did not accept them. Just before ice closed the pond towards the end of December, both birds were engaged in tidying up the nest early one morning.

V. R. GARRETT.

In the Dell, Hyde Park, a brood of newly hatched chicks was seen on September 29 by R. W. Hayman, and a pair with quite small young was still there on November 3 (A. V. Tucker).

# Bird Notes of the Elmers End Sewage Farm, 1935-1938.

By G. E. MANSER.

---

THE South Norwood Sewage Farm of the Croydon Corporation is some 191 acres in extent, and is situated between Elmers End, Beckenham, and Woodside, Croydon. The Southern Railway divides it into two portions. The southern side, bounded by Long Lane, is approximately one-third of the total area. The north side is bounded by the Elmers End Cemetery and a housing estate.

The county boundary cuts the farm about 200 yards in from the western edge. I feel that this is of no serious consequence and for the sake of all records previously sent into the London Natural History Society I have ignored the small area of Surrey and rendered my observations under Kent.

In *Birds of the Norwood District* (1934) F. G. Swayne refers to the area as the "Irrigation Farm," which possibly describes it more exactly, for during the time of my observations some 160 acres were periodically flooded. Now (1943), however, parts of the farm are used for allotments, and consequent change of bird population might be expected. Arable land of approximately 30 acres grows root crops, green stuffs and clover. The north-west corner of the farm with 18 percolating filters 76 ft. in diameter and farm buildings is of little ecological interest except perhaps to note here that starlings, pipits and wagtails feed regularly on the filters. The fields are flooded regularly, and unless the observer is prepared to wear gumboots it is impossible to carry out counts over the 94 per cent. of the total acreage thus affected. The large refuse dumps prove a profitable hunting ground for finches, starlings, sparrows and Corvidae. A belt of poplar trees lines the north and west boundaries and one of pines the east side. The railway is also lined with pine trees.

The observations here collated were taken over a period of almost three years of weekly visits (October 1935-March 1938) during which time counts were made of most species on every occasion. Uncommon species have occurred, the Stone Curlew, Reed Warbler and Corn Crake being examples. These wanderers, however, cannot be considered as contributing any facts of ornithological consequence, the whole survey having been undertaken to obtain a cross section of bird life on a local sewage farm.

The only previous notes I can refer to are those of F. G. Swayne (F.G.S.) and I find that most of our observations tally, but there are a few cases where there are slight divergences—these I have acknowledged.

I most certainly owe P. W. Ratcliff a word of thanks in helping me on counts and in producing notes for me when I was unable to visit the farm.

The numbers preceding the names of the species in the following list refer to Witherby's *Check List of British Birds* (1941), where the scientific names are given in full.

### Systematic List.

2. **Hooded Crow.** One stayed over the 1934-35 winter from Nov. 3 until the following Feb. Two were seen Mar. 31, 1935. In 1936 no birds were observed—one appeared on Oct. 17, 1937.
3. **Carrion Crow.** One or two pairs nested regularly on the north edge of the area in the tall trees along the cemetery boundary.
4. **Rook.** A few pairs frequent the farm all the year, but in winter and severe weather flocks up to 100 have been noted. Feeds on the refuse dumps.
5. **Jackdaw.** Several pairs nest on the edge of the farm in the pollard trees on the Norwood boundary, and one or two large trees in the farm have proved nesting haunts. In winter flocks up to 200 strong have been observed in company with rooks. Feeds regularly on the dumps.
11. **Jay.** Not often observed on the farm; a winter visitor, and then only to the wooded boundaries.
14. **Starling.** Far and away the most common bird observed. Huge flocks in winter feed on the settling tanks and filter beds. A common nesting species. The Selsdon roost (See Fitter 1943) is used by the winter flocks.
19. **Greenfinch.** In common with the other finches more of a winter visitor, although one pair nested in 1936. Numbers vary from 6 to 14 in winter to none at all mid-summer and increasing from the end of August.
20. **Goldfinch.** An erratic visitor usually appearing in ones or twos and in company with the other finches; max. 15 on Mar. 28, 1937.
25. **Lesser Redpoll.** Only observed twice, in Dec. 1937, and in Feb. 1938, and then in company with other finches.
30. **Linnet.** Present throughout the year except in June. The largest flocks observed in Oct. and Nov. In 1935 I found one nesting in an old cabbage stump and in 1937 one in an elderberry tree.
41. **Chaffinch.** Nov. to Feb. give the highest average count figures over the period of observation. Apart from local nesting birds the chaffinch is absent during summer.
42. **Brambling.** A regular winter visitor appearing in Oct. and departing in Mar. or April. The largest number seen was 25 in a flock Mar. 28, 1937. Earliest date, Oct 17; latest, April 11.
43. **Corn-Bunting.** Only one recorded, Oct. 21, 1934.
44. **Yellow-Hammer.** Three records only: Oct. 6, 1934, Feb. 16 and Mar. 8, 1936.

55. **Reed-Bunting.** Declined as a nesting species. During 1935 eight pairs were estimated as nesting, and in 1936 four or five pairs, but in 1937 no birds were observed during the nesting season. During winter months four or five birds regularly seen. Noted in July and Aug., 1932. (F.G.S.).
61. **House Sparrow.** Very prolific, breeding in every available site.
62. **Tree Sparrow.** Seen from September to April, only. The best year was 1935, when winter counts averaged 50 birds. Flocks of 150-200 have been observed in winter—in Oct. and Nov. 1934, Jan. and Nov. 1935. Also observed in Nov. and Dec. 1933 in company with house sparrows on the dumps. (F.G.S.).
70. **Skylark.** Large numbers observed during the cold winter spells when flocks of up to 200 were found feeding on the rough land. Present at other times also. Suspected nesting in 1936 and 1937 but not proved.
75. **Tree-Pipit.** Occurred in the Spring of 1935 but only on migration.
76. **Meadow-Pipit.** The species is absent during the summer months of June, July and Aug., but returns in Sept. Maximum numbers of 150-200 are observed in Oct. and Nov., but dropping to a constant of about 60 birds until Mar.
88. **Yellow Wagtail.** Nested in 1932-33 (F.G.S.), and again in 1935, when two pairs successfully reared young. In 1936 three pairs bred, and in 1937 one pair reared young.
89. **Grey Wagtail.** In 1933 the bird was suspected nesting, and at the end of the season a nest was found with one addled egg. In 1934 and 1935 one pair nested and brought off young. Although a pair frequented the farm in 1936 and 1937, haunting the previous nesting area, nesting suspicions were not confirmed. Stated by F.G.S. to be resident.
90. **Pied Wagtail.** Thirty or forty regularly seen during winter months, dwindling to two or three nesting pairs.
91. **White Wagtail.** Only two records obtained. Three seen Mar. 22, 1936, and one again Apr. 18, 1937.
98. **Great Tit.** Seen throughout the year in the wooded boundaries of the farm. Undoubtedly nests.
100. **Blue Tit.** Seen throughout the year in the wooded boundaries, and at times along the little streams and gullies. No doubt nests.
102. **Coal-Tit.** An infrequent autumn visitor to the farm, found in the pines bordering the railway line.
119. **Red-Backed Shrike.** One record: an immature bird on Aug. 30, 1936.
121. **Spotted Flycatcher.** Two records, both in 1936: one on May 10, and an immature bird on Aug. 30.
129. **Chiffchaff.** A passage migrant, only seen in spring and autumn, and then in the wooded boundaries.

132. **Willow-Warbler.** Occurs regularly in spring and autumn, but does not nest.
149. **Reed-Warbler.** One seen April 26, 1936, and another Sept. 30 in the same year. There are no suitable nesting habitats.
153. **Sedge-Warbler.** In the early Autumn of 1934 two birds were seen in the fringe of a pond and one bird was seen here in Sept. 1935. In 1936 a pair nested and reared young in the same spot. One seen in Aug. 1937 is the only subsequent record.
163. **Common Whitethroat.** Three or four pairs nest every year.
173. **Fieldfare.** Like the Redwing its numbers are affected by cold weather. During normal winter months up to 6 birds can be seen.
174. **Mistle-Thrush.** Flocks up to 15 have been seen during the winter in company with redwings. It has nested in the cemetery boundary trees.
175. **Song-Thrush.** A regular nesting species. Five or six nests are found every season. There is no apparent seasonal change in numbers.
178. **Redwing.** Cold winter spells seem to affect the usual winter flocks of up to a dozen. During Jan. and Feb. 1936 up to 200 birds were seen.
184. **Blackbird.** A regular nesting species with a status very similar to that of the Song-Thrush.
186. **Wheatear.** A regular visitor on spring and autumn migration, passing through in ones and twos.
187. **Greenland Wheatear.** Two seen, one on Apr. 26, 1936, and another in the spring of 1937.
197. **Whinchat.** In 1934 one bird was seen on Oct. 21. In the spring of 1936 and 1937 it appeared on migration. Three return migration dates of Aug. 23, Sept. 13 and 27, 1936, are the only autumn records.
198. **Stonechat.** One or two birds appear every year during winter months.
208. **Robin.** One or two pairs nest every year.
211. **Hedge-Sparrow.** One or two pairs nest every year on the outer fringes of the farm where good nesting localities are available.
213. **Wren.** One or two pairs nest every year.
220. **Swallow.** Two or three pairs nest regularly in the farm buildings.
222. **House-Martin.** Observed only passing through on migration or straying from local nesting localities.
223. **Sand-Martin.** A party of six passed over in Oct. 1935; in 1936 a few odd birds in April, and again in Sept.
225. **Swift.** Frequents the farm as a feeding area from May to Aug. Nests nearby.
237. **Greater Spotted Woodpecker.** A winter wanderer to the farm, usually seen singly.



- 249. Little Owl.** Only seen twice during the period of observation. In Jan. 1935 I found one dead, and in the autumn of 1936 one bird frequented the farm.
- 254. Barn-Owl.** One bird regularly seen roosting in a pollard tree late winter and early spring, 1935-36. Snipe remains were found in its roost on two occasions and also water-rail feathers. A dead barn-owl was picked up Feb. 12, 1936, underneath railway telegraph wires.
- 263. Kestrel.** Regularly seen over the open fields throughout the year. In 1935 one pair nested and reared three young. In Feb. 1936 one bird was severely mauled by a rat which dragged the bird by the wing into the entrance of its hole. The commotion attracted the attention of a farm worker, who put the torn kestrel out of its misery. Suspected nesting in 1937 in the vicinity of the farm as immature birds were seen throughout the summer.
- 277. Sparrow-Hawk.** In 1934 a pair nested in an old crow's nest on the edge of the cemetery. One odd bird appeared in Aug. of 1936 and 1937.
- 289. Heron.** Occasionally visits the farm during the early morning in the autumn and winter months.
- 302. Mute Swan.** Has been known to settle when flying over the farm.
- 380. Wood-Pigeon.** Large flocks up to 200 occur every year in late summer.
- 381. Stock-Dove.** One or two winter records of stragglers.
- 395. Common Snipe.** Flocks up to 30-40 seen every winter, numbers dropping to two or three birds by Apr., when nuptial display has been observed. In 1934 one pair was reported to have bred, and in 1938 a pair was suspected to have done so, but on neither occasion was there definite proof.
- 398. Jack Snipe.** Two or three occur every winter. On one occasion I trapped one between my gum boots as the bird rose from under my feet.
- 404/5. Dunlin.** One recorded by the late Mr W. N. Rushen, Dec. 1931.
- 428. Redshank.** In 1936 a single bird remained on the farm from Mar. to the end of April. This is the only record of the bird having remained on the farm.
- 440/1. Golden Plover.** Flock of eight, Feb. 16, 1936.
- 449. Lapwing.** Two or three pairs nest regularly. During winter months weather usually decides the size of the flocks feeding on the farm. Up to 150 have been counted during Jan. and Feb.
- 456. Stone Curlew.** One bird seen April 5, 1934 (not 1924 as stated in Harrison (1942)).
- 478. Black-headed Gull.** A winter visitor, numbers rising to 1000 in Jan. and Feb. This species does not seem to be so affected by seasonal changes as the Common and Herring Gulls.

481. **Common Gull.** Present in small numbers during the winter.
482. **Herring-Gull.** Large flocks up to 500 and 600 during Jan. and Feb., but diminishing quickly to one or two birds in March.
504. **Corn-Crake.** One recorded, Sept. 9, 1935.
509. **Water-Rail.** One or two birds seen every winter during Jan. and Feb. In 1935 water-rail remains were found in the roosting hole of the Barn-Owl.
510. **Moorhen.** A resident. Half-a-dozen birds feed regularly on the flooded fields. One or two pairs nest.
518. **Common Partridge.** Nested in 1936, but subsequently exterminated. No record after Apr. 11, 1937.

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## London Bird Life and the Flying Bomb Attacks.

**T**HE flying bomb attacks during the summer of 1944 failed to break the spirit of Londoners, and there is little evidence that they had more than a temporary effect on London's bird life.

V.R.G. records that a pair of Tawny Owls (*Strix aluco sylvatica* Shaw) at Hampstead became very vocal after the bursting of a flying bomb but, contrary to statements in the correspondence columns of *The Times*, they did not leave the neighbourhood. The Pelicans in St James's Park were apparently quite unmoved by the noise of guns and bombs and E.H.W. states that a group of Black-headed Gulls (*Larus r. ridibundus* L.) near Fetter Lane was very little disturbed by the rocket which exploded in Chancery Lane. It was reported that Wood-Pigeons (*Columba p. palumbus* L.) left the Central Parks during the attacks and did not return until they ceased, but Hinton states that they have been very scarce in St James's Park for the last year or two and there is no doubt that the campaign against them has greatly reduced their numbers in the London area. F.C.B. reports unusual movements of Lapwings (*Vanellus vanellus* (L.)) over Mill Hill and district from June 18-20 (the flying bomb attacks started on June 15), and suggests that as all the birds came from a S.E. or S.S.E. direction they may have been driven from Kent by the stream of flying bombs.

E. R. P.

# Bird Ringing in 1944.

---

**T**HE Society's returns to the Bird Ringing Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology show a further recovery: 437 birds of 44 species were ringed, as compared with 389 birds of 44 species in 1943. It is notable that Mr Parrinder's total included 110 nestling Stonechats and that Mr Bartlett caught 74 adult Black-headed Gulls individually by hand. The following table analyses the work of the 13 ringers who took part:—

Name of Ringer.	Nestlings.	Trapped.	Total.
C. B. Ashby .....	1	—	1
T. L. Bartlett .....	4	109	113
F. W. Blake .....	13	—	13
S. Boardman .....	2	—	2
R. S. R. Fitter .....	9	1	10
E. O. Hohn .....	6	31	37
K. E. Hoy .....	1	—	1
G. E. Manser .....	20	—	20
E. R. Parrinder .....	137	—	137
B. A. Richards .....	3	—	3
J. E. Roberts .....	49	—	49
A. C. Wheeler .....	23	—	23
J. A. Wigzell .....	8	20	28
<b>Total, 1944</b> .....	<b>276</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>437</b>
<b>Total, 1943</b> .....	<b>243</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>389</b>

The most numerous species ringed were: Stonechat 110, Black-headed Gull 74, Song Thrush 29, Tufted Duck 29, Swallow 21.

Rings are still obtainable at a cost of 1s per packet of 20 from the Bird Ringing Secretary, R. W. Hale, 6 Grendon Gardens, Wembley Park, Middx., who will be glad to hear from any member interested.

R. W. H.

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## How to Send in Your Records.

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**T**O facilitate the task of entering records on the sheets, observers are asked to make use of the special new half-yearly recording sheets, which may be obtained for North of the Thames from Mr E. R. Parrinder, 27 Gwalior House, Chase Rd., N.14, and for South of the Thames from Mr C. B. Ashby, 20 Denmark Rd., Carshalton, Surrey. Please list the species in the order of Witherby's "Check-List," and send in your notes as soon as possible after the end of each half-year (June 30 and Dec. 31). As a rough guide to what to send in, notes on any species not described as "generally distributed" in the "Check-List" in the 1943 *L.B.R.* are most valuable, also definite breeding records of all but the commonest species, and notes of all species in unusual places, such as Inner London. Behaviour notes are not wanted unless they are (a) unrecorded or only rarely recorded, or (b) of special local significance in the London area. Notes on food or any other factor bearing on the ecology of the London area are especially valuable.



*Supplement to The London Naturalist.*

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*The*  
LONDON  
BIRD REPORT

FOR

1945

*No. 10*

An Annual Report on Bird-Life within Twenty Miles of  
St Paul's Cathedral.

EDITED BY

The Records Committee of the Ornithological Section  
(R. S. R. FITTER, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U. (Chairman), C. B. ASHBY, and  
E. R. PARRINDER, M.B.O.U.).

Price 1s 6d.



PUBLISHED BY THE  
LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,  
THE LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE AND TROPICAL MEDICINE,  
KEPPEL STREET, GOWER STREET, LONDON, W.C.1.

DATE OF PUBLICATION, JULY 1946.

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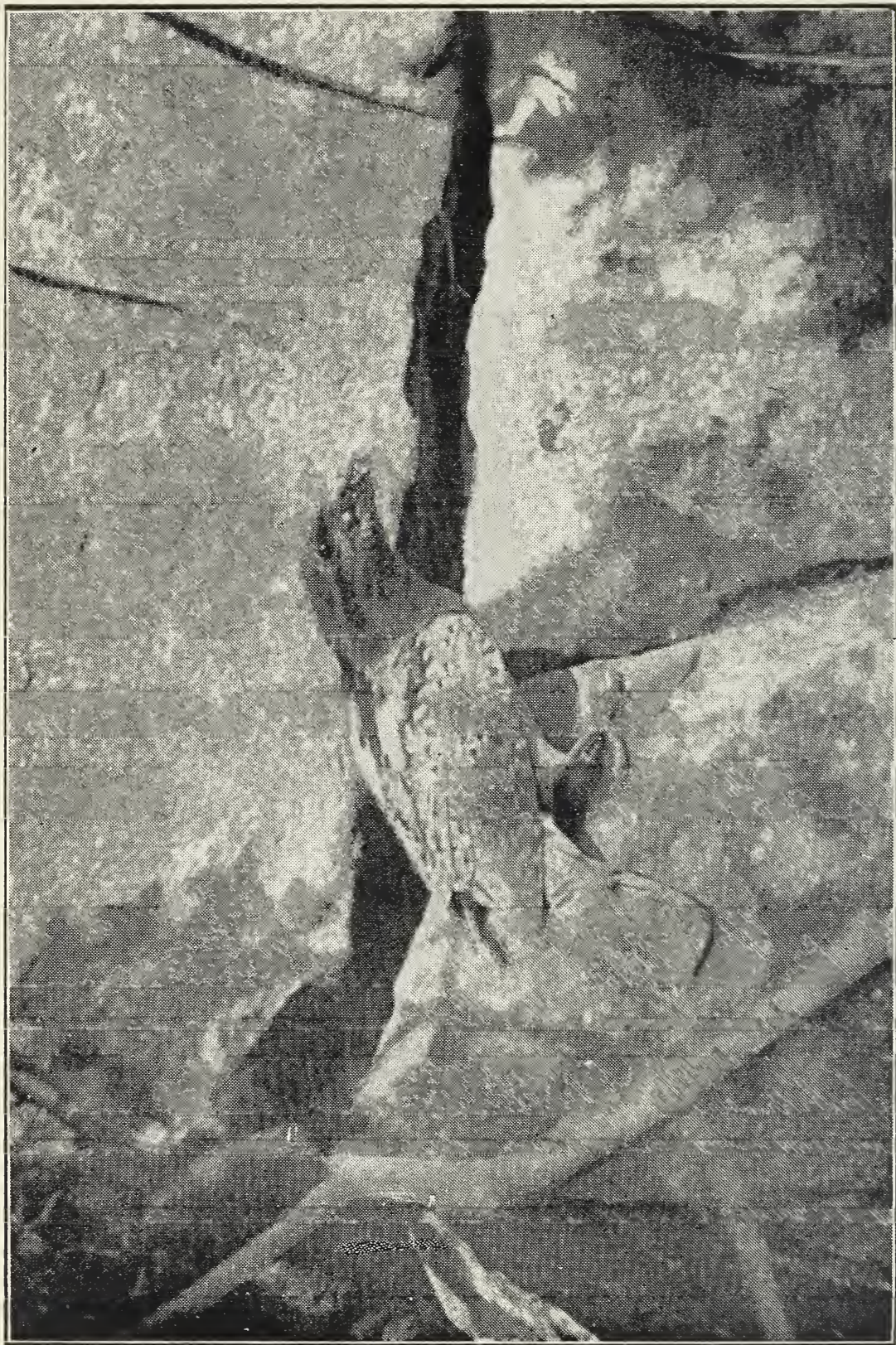


Plate 1.

WRYNECK AT NESTING HOLE IN STONE WALL, CHIPSTEAD, 1965.

Photo: C. B. Ashby.



# The London Bird Report, 1945.

## Introduction.

ONCE again the London Area has held breeding pairs of two of the rarest British breeding birds: in 1945 the only two pairs of Little Ringed Plovers and half the six pairs of Black Redstarts known to nest in the British Isles were in the County of Middlesex. Another striking event of the year was the discovery of two new heronries in the Area, one at Parndon in Essex, and one at Kempton in Middlesex. A pair of Wood-Larks that nested in Hainault Forest constituted the first record for the Essex part of the Area for 40 years, and the second breeding record for the county since the middle of the 19th century.

Other noteworthy ornithological events included the first Hooded Crow in the London Area for seven years, Great Grey Shrikes at Mill Hill, Northolt, Burgh Heath and Bookham, winter records for both Blackcap and Garden-Warbler, a Hoopoe at Kingston, a Roller in Deptford (of all places!), four Black-tailed Godwits and a Spotted Redshank at Lonsdale Road Reservoirs, a Little Gull on the Thames Embankment, a Puffin at Shoreham, and a Quail at West Molesey. The reopening of Staines Reservoirs to the public yielded a list of species including the Red-necked and Black-necked Grebes, Grey Phalarope, Knot, Ruff, Greenshank, Grey Plover, Oystercatcher, Black and Little Terns, and Little Gull.

The main effort in co-operative bird-watching during the year was an almost complete census of the Rookeries of the London Area, on behalf of the Rook Investigation of the British Trust for Ornithology: 355 rookeries containing 9971 nests were enumerated. The Society also helped in the Annual Sample Census of Heronries, the Black Redstarts Inquiry, and the Bird-Ringing Scheme of the Trust.

In 1945 one hundred and twenty-seven observers (an increase of fifteen on 1944) recorded one hundred and sixty-one different species or subspecies of birds (an increase of eleven on 1944). The Records Committee wish to express their thanks to all these observers and to others who have supplied information during the year, and their special thanks to Mrs E. D. Parrinder and Mr W. A. Wright for help with entering the records on the cards, and to Dr G. Beven and Mr W. G. Teagle for help with checking.

## List of Observers.

K. Allsop.	Miss D. M. Braithwaite.	J. Chynoweth.
C. B. Ashby.	Mrs W. Brewer	C. L. Collenette.
S. Austin.	(per C.B.A.).	J. R. Crawford.
C. E. Baker.	F. C. Bromley.	R. P. Dales.
F. J. F. Barrington.	J. Brown (per R.W.).	A. Darlington.
T. L. Bartlett.	H. J. Burkill.	F. C. Davies (per C.B.A.).
H. Bedford (H.Bd.).	E. J. M. Buxton.	G. Dent.
J. S. S. Beesley.	G. W. Calvert.	C. Dolley.
H. Bentham.	L. I. Carrington.	R. Preston Donaldson.
G. Beven.	J. S. Carter.	H. Doodes (per R.W.).
T. Bispham.	C. P. Castell.	L. J. Dosseter.
F. W. Borman.	K. R. Chandler.	Miss K. Douglas-Smith.
Rev. M. O. Boyd.	Mrs C. D. E. Christopher.	K. V. Elphinstone.

Dr R. R. Elworthy.	K. A. Lindley.	R. H. Ryall.
L. R. Evans.	Miss C. E. Longfield.	A. Shoesmith (per R.W.).
W. H. Feakes.	Dr G. C. Low.	P. L. Simmonds.
F. Firth.	Miss E. McEwen.	S. H. Singleton.
F. M. Firth.	E. Mann.	W. J. L. Sladen.
Mrs M. S. Fitter.	F. R. Mann.	J. S. Smith (per R.W.).
R. S. R. Fitter.	Sir P. Manson-Bahr.	M. Smith.
F. J. French.	L. Mills.	R. H. Smith.
V. R. Garrett.	D. A. T. Morgan.	R. M. Smith.
P. Gladstone.	R. P. Napper.	A. N. Sykes.
H. G. Gould.	E. M. Nicholson.	W. G. Teagle.
C. H. B. Grant.	Mrs E. D. Parrinder.	S. J. Teideman.
R. W. Hale.	E. R. Parrinder.	A. G. G. Thompson
P. J. Hanson.	C. H. F. Parsons.	(per C.B.A.).
A. G. Hancock.	C. W. G. Paulson.	A. J. B. Thompson.
D. D. Harber.	E. W. Pearce.	Dr W. W. Thomson.
Dr J. K. Hasler.	E. G. Pedler.	G. H. Underhill.
R. W. Hayman (R.W.Hn.).	W. R. Philipson.	D. W. Vere.
H. H. S. Hayward.	Capt. G. Wand Piercy.	Dr G. M. Vevers.
Dr E. O. Höhn.	B. H. Potter.	G. Warburg.
P. A. D. Hollom.	H. E. Pounds.	R. Ward (per R.S.R.F.).
F. J. Holroyde	Mrs M. E. Price.	Prof. E. H. Warmington.
A. B. Hornblower.	D. C. Rattenbury.	M. Waterhouse.
C. E. Hutchings.	D. A. Rawlence.	Mrs M. S. Wathen.
W. P. Jobson.	Miss M. Ray.	Mrs E. M. Watt.
Miss L. J. Johns.	J. M. Rendel.	A. E. Weibel.
H. S. Kerley.	B. A. Richards.	A. C. Wheeler.
Mrs H. M. Rait-Kerr.	C. W. M. Rogers (per R.W.).	J. A. Wigzell.
Major K. P. Keywood.	E. A. Round.	J. D. Wood.
P. R. Knipe.	P. F. C. Rumsey.	W. A. Wright.

## Birds in the London Area, 1945.

### A REPORT ON BIRD LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

Compiled by E. R. PARRINDER and C. B. ASHBY.

FOR an account of the status of all species in the London Area, reference should be made to "A Check-List of the Birds of the London Area" in the *L.B.R.* for 1943. In the present report records of species described in the "Check-List," as being generally distributed have for the most part been omitted.

The number preceding the name of each species refers to Witherby's *Check-List of British Birds* (1941), where the full scientific names will be found. All records refer to 1945, except where otherwise stated. The initials following each record indicate the observer(s) responsible for it. The six counties within the 20-mile radius are indicated by their initials, viz.: B = Bucks; E = Essex; H = Herts; K = Kent; M = Middlesex; S = Surrey. Records on the Thames and its immediate surroundings are put under T. The following abbreviations are also used: *B.B.* = *British Birds* magazine; G.P. = Gravel Pit; *L.B.R.* = *London Bird Report*; Res. = Reservoir; S.F. = Sewage Farm.

**2. Hooded Crow.**

S. Beddington S.F., one on Dec. 22 and 26 (C.B.A.); this is the first record for the London Area since 1938.

**4. Rook.**

E. Chingford, Jan. 16, one perched on an apple tree and without hesitation pulled up a piece of string and ate some bread which had been tied to the end for tits (E.A.R.).

**14. Starling.**

M. Feltham, one recovered on Feb. 21, had been ringed at Worcester Park, Surrey, on Jan. 23, 1939 (*B.B.*, 38, 347).

S. One ringed at Worcester Park on 17.12.38 was recovered where ringed in April 1945 (*Ibid.*).

**18. Hawfinch.**

E. Epping Forest, at least two pairs nested (L.J.D., A.C.W.); winter maximum, c. 30 at High Beach on Dec. 1 (P.F.C.R.).

K. Chislehurst, a pair with three or four young on May 21 (F.J.H.). Westerham, one to six seen 8 times between Oct. and Dec. (K.R.C.).

M. Bushy Park, a female on May 16 (E.W.P.). Hampstead Heath, probably bred; a female seen collecting food on May 7 (V.R.G.). Northwood, one on Apr. 7 (R.S.R.F.). Stanmore, several broods (E.H.W.).

S. Family parties seen at Chelsham (H.E.P.), and Chipstead (L.I.C.) in June. From Jan. to July single birds and small parties up to c. 10 recorded at Kew Gdns., Putney Heath, Wimbledon Common, and the usual North Downs localities; c. 15 at Chipstead on July 10. Noted at Wimbledon and Limpsfield from Oct. to Dec., max. 8 on Dec. 13 (many observers).

**20. Goldfinch.**

E. Chingford, five nests found; 18 young flew from 19 eggs (A.C.W.).

M. Nested by public roads at Mill Hill, and at Canons Park a pair nested in a tree by busiest traffic road at shopping centre (E.H.W.).

**21. Siskin.**

B. Iver, one in alders by R. Colnbrook on Dec. 29 (P.R.K.).

M. Bushy Park, 12 on alders on Dec. 7 and 20 on Dec. 11 (E.W.P.). Enfield, seen with Redpolls in Whitewebbs Park on Nov. 11, Nov. 25 (c. 20), and Dec. 30 (L.J.J.). Hampstead Heath, two on birches on Apr. 1 (V.R.G.). Harefield Moor, c. 20 on Nov. 25 (R.H.R.). Northwood, six in alders on Dec. 23 (W.J.L.S.). Nr. Rickmansworth, c. 5 on Nov. 25 (P.J.H.).

S. Selsdon, one on birches, Mar. 24 (F.F.).

**25. Lesser Redpoll.**

- E. Recorded as usual from Epping Forest in winter.  
 K. Nested at Bickley, and noted at Chislehurst in the breeding season (R.W.H.).  
 S. Nested at Selsdon (F.F.) and Tadworth (H.B., L.I.C.). Esher, c. 40 on Jan. 6 (W.J.L.S.). Wandsworth Common, one feeding on birch on Dec. 30 (E.M.N.).

**36. Crossbill.**

- H. Watford. a pair seen in Scots Pine at Garston on June 19; worked cones were found on the ground below; one bird was seen again about ten days later (A.B.H.).  
 S. Chipstead, a hen on July 8 (L.I.C.).

**41. Chaffinch.**

- M. A cock seen feeding on a fried potato chip, Hampstead, Apr. 19; on another occasion a hen was seen pecking a raw potato (V.R.G.).

**42. Brambling.**

- E. Epping Forest, again scarce, one to six seen between Mar. 24 and Apr. 12 (S.A., P.F.C.R., W.A.W.).  
 K. Bromley Common, one on Dec. 1 and 4 (J.S.S.B.).  
 M. Mill Hill, a male with Chaffinches under beeches on Jan. 22 (E.H.W.).  
 S. Woodmansterne, one on Jan. 25 and three on Jan. 29; Upper Gatton, one on Nov. 1 and two on Nov. 6 (L.I.C.).

**43. Corn-Bunting.**

- H. Broad Colney, one singing on June 24 and July 8 (E.R.P.).

**49. Cirl-Bunting.**

- S. Betchworth, a singing male on Apr. 7 (C.B.A.).

**61. House Sparrow.**

- H. A pair nested in a hole in a verandah ceiling at Garston: there was a narrow ledge 10-12 inches below the hole, and the adults were seen to alight on this and fly up and feed the young, whose bills projected from the hole, while still in the air, their wings whirring rapidly to maintain stability (A.B.H.).  
 M. Fetter Lane, E.C., three were seen to fly up and catch snowflakes, apparently mistaking them for insects (B.H.P.).

**62. Tree-Sparrow.**

- E. Nested as usual at Sewardstone (P.F.C.R.). Three breeding colonies located at Chingford (A.C.W.).  
 H. Small colony at Old Parkbury G.P., Colney St. (E.R.P.).  
 M. Bred at Hanworth and Sunbury (E.W.P.); seen in breeding season at Ashford, Feltham, and Barn Hill, Wembley (E.W.P., E.O.H., R.W.H.). c. 100 at Brent Res. on Mar. 6 (T.B.).

- S. Recorded at Mickleham in breeding season (H.B.). Small numbers in winter at Beddington S.F., Mitcham, Headley, Leatherhead and Tadworth.

#### 69. Woodlark.

- E. Probably bred in Hainault Forest; one seen and heard on Apr. 23, and a pair on May 12; one seen with food in beak on June 12 and on two other occasions during the summer (E. R. Baker, *B.B.*, 38, 353). This is the first record from the Essex part of our Area since 1905, and the second breeding record for the whole county since the mid-19th century.
- H. Watford, one heard near Garston on a number of occasions in July (A.B.H., W.A.W.).
- S. Nests found at two North Downs localities on May 16, and a pair seen at a third locality on May 21 (H.B., L.I.C.). Mickleham, one singing on Mar. 25 (Field Meeting). Fetcham Downs, one singing on Feb. 18 (G.B., C.P.C.), and a pair on June 23 (L.I.C.). Richmond Park, a pair present during the breeding season, and one on Dec. 23 (C.L.C. and others). During spring and summer single birds recorded at Ham Common (F.R.M.), Wimbledon Common (C.D., R.W.Hn.) and Esher Common (W.J.L.S.), and on the edge of the Society's area at Wisley Common (R.W.Hn.) and Effingham (P.J.H.). Tadworth, one singing on Sept. 30 (H.B.).

#### 70. Skylark.

- M./S. Inner London, small numbers reported at Battersea Park, Regents Park, Marylebone and Putney in cold spell, Jan. 20-28 (H.R.K., E.M.N., B.A.R.).

#### 75. Tree Pipit.

- S. One over Battersea Park on Apr. 21 (E.M.N.).

#### 85. Grey-Headed Wagtail.

- M. [A male Wagtail resembling *Motacilla flava thunbergi* was seen by T.B. at the Brent Res. on April 7. He describes it as having a grey-blue crown (darker and greyer than *M. f. flava*), almost black lores and ear-coverts, white chin, but no visible eye stripe. The record is placed in square brackets as (1) the differences between *M. f. thunbergi* and *M. f. cinereocapilla* and other forms are very slight, and there is evidently considerable variability, e.g., in the amount of eye stripe; it is felt, therefore, that these forms cannot be satisfactorily separated in the field; (2) the possibility of the bird being a mutant or variant cannot be excluded, especially in view of the breeding records of mutants resembling Sykes Wagtail (*M. f. beema*) in S.E. England.]

**88. Yellow Wagtail.**

- E. East Ham, five pairs nested at Beckton Gas Works (R.W.). Dagenham Dock, May 16, pair on waste ground, used for stacking pig iron, near blast furnace (J.S.C.). Sewardstone, nested as usual (P.F.C.R.).
- H. Borehamwood, a male on May 30 (F.C.B.). Colney Street, 3-4 pairs nested at Moor Mill G.P. (E.R.P.).
- M. Brent Res., four pairs bred, as in 1944 (F.C.B.); at the end of August several hundred migrants were seen in one day, three days later the number had decreased considerably, and a few days later again only a few birds were left (G.W.). Hampton, a pair nested on the Grammar School playing field (E.W.P.). Inner London, one in Hyde Park on Aug. 27 and Sept. 7 (E.M.N.).
- S. Beddington S.F., at least five pairs bred (A.G.G.T.).

**89. Grey Wagtail.**

- M. A pair seen in the breeding season at Bushy Park (E.W.P.), and at Whitewebbs Park, Enfield (L.J.J.). Inner London, again many records from static water tanks, etc., from Sept. 17 until Nov. 17, with the peak period in October; on Nov. 8 W.G.T. saw one perched on the bonnet of a car at Marble Arch.
- S. Cobham, a brood on June 25 (R.W.Hn.). Reported from Beddington and Leatherhead in May.

**90. Pied Wagtail.**

- E. A pair nested in a large flower pot on a double row of pipes in a glasshouse at Sewardstone (P.F.C.R.).
- H. Shenley, eight roosting on a log in a small lake on May 7 (F.C.B.).
- S. Black Pond, Esher Common, seen roosting in reed bed, Nov. 4 (K.P.K.): this is the roost described in *L.B.R.*, 1936, pp. 28-29, and *L.B.R.*, 1937, p. 7.

**91. White Wagtail.**

- S. Esher, a male on May 28 (B.A.R.).

**93. Tree-Creeper.**

- E. Sewardstone, Jan. 10, one watched climbing a wall of a bungalow (P.F.C.R.).
- M. Inner London, bred in Kensington Gardens (E.M.N.). Two Tree-creepers were seen fighting in January at Pinner; even on close approach they paid little attention to the observer, until he tried to pick them up; the first attempt was evaded, but on the second attempt one bird was caught and the other could have been caught if the risk of hurting it had been taken (J.M.R.).

**100. Blue Tit.**

M. Inner London, six on lilac and privet bushes in Nevill's Court, E.C., on Oct. 13 (F.J.H.); one on the Houses of Parliament on Nov. 7 (E.H.W.).

**101. Coal-Tit.**

M. Inner London, now resident in Kensington Gardens (E.M.N.).

**108. Willow-Tit.**

E. Epping Forest, a nest found near Connaught Water on Apr. 14 (P.F.C.R., W.A.W.). Sewardstone, one on Mar. 15 and Aug. 20 (W.A.W.).

H. Cuffley Great Wood, one on Apr. 29 (E.R.P.). Oxhey Woods, one on Apr. 5 and a pair on Apr. 21 (R.S.R.F.).

M. Enfield, one hammering on a tree in Whitewebbs Park on Mar. 30 (E.R.P.), and one on Apr. 22 (L.J.J.). Ruislip Common, recorded as usual in winter (C.D., W.R.P., and others).

S. Ashted Forest, one on July 13 (G.B.). Wimbledon Common, one on Feb. 10 (C.D.).

**111. Long-tailed Tit.**

E. Four feeding on the mud at Woodford S.F. on Jan. 13 (W.A.W.); this species is rarely seen on the ground.

**114. Great Grey Shrike.**

M. Mill Hill, one seen on Jan. 1 had dull black and white plumage and semi-circular bars on the under-parts (E.H.W.); one watched at Colindale, about a mile S.W. of last, on Jan. 28 and again on Feb. 1 by F.J.F.B. may have been a different bird as no barrings were observed, although it was seen at close range. Northolt Park, one on Jan. 27 and 28 (H.Bd., T.L.B.).

S. Bookham Common, one on Apr. 2 (R.W.Hn.). Burgh Heath, one on Dec. 30 (H.B.).

**119. Red-backed Shrike.**

E. Epping Forest, at least twelve pairs probably bred (W.A.W.). Sewardstone, five pairs bred; one adult was found dead beside a nest full of dead young (P.F.C.R.). Lea Valley, an adult and a young bird seen on July 25 opposite Cheshunt G.P. (W.A.W.).

H. Radlett, a female near Old Parkbury G.P. on Aug. 11 (E.R.P.).

M. Brent Res., may have bred nearby; a male seen on July 7 and a pair with three young on July 31 (T.B.). Ruislip Common, three pairs present, two reared young (T.L.B., P.R.K.). Scratch Wood, one pair bred as usual (E.H.W.). Recorded in breeding season from Enfield and Hillyfields Park (L.J.J.).

S. Mitcham Common, at least two pairs nested (W.W.T.). Recorded at Bookham Common, Cobham and Limpsfield in June and July.

**121. Spotted Flycatcher.**

E./M. More numerous than usual in Epping Forest and at Ealing and Hampstead. Inner London, bred in Kensington Gardens (E.M.N.), Lincoln's Inn Fields (H.B., E.H.W.) and the Temple (H.B., E.M.).

**127. Goldcrest.**

M. Inner London, two in Kensington Gardens on Mar. 25 (G.C.L.).

**129. Chiffchaff.**

Earlier than usual: fourteen records before mean arrival date (March 23, see *L.B.R.*, 1939, p. 32); earliest dates, Mar 14, Bickley, Kent (F.J.H.), and Mar. 16, Coulsdon, Surrey (K.R.C.).

**135. Wood-Warbler.**

E. Epping Forest, 11 birds heard, five nests found (C.E.B.).  
M. Inner London, two in Kensington Gardens on July 30 (E.M.N.). Hampstead Heath, a pair seen between Apr. 29-July 8 probably nested (V.R.G.); two singing on May 13 (R.S.R.F.).

**145. Grasshopper Warbler.**

H. Borehamwood, one singing on Apr. 16 (F.C.B.).  
M. Mill Hill, one singing on bushy waste land between Apr. 25 and May 8, but not subsequently (E.H.W.).  
S. Bookham Common, noted in May and June (B.A.R., R.W.Hn.). Godstone, one on Aug. 2 (L.I.C.).

**149. Reed-Warbler.**

E. Sewardstone, nested at the gravel pit (W.A.W.).  
H. Cheshunt, one on May 28 (W.A.W.).  
M. Brent Res., a pair nested (T.B.). Feltham G.P., one on May 11 (E.O.H.). Ruislip Res., a pair on July 6 (F.C.B.). Brentford, three singing on Syon House Marsh in June (C.D.).  
S. Beddington S.F., three singing on May 15 and adult feeding young on Aug. 11; Epsom S.F., six singing males on June 16, two nests found (H.B., L.I.C.). Molesey, two nests, with young, by R. Thames on June 23 (E.W.P.).

**153. Sedge-Warbler.**

M. Inner London, Temple Hall, one amongst dense growth of tall willowherb on Aug. 20 (H.B.).

**161. Garden-Warbler.**

M. Hampstead, sub-song heard, and bird seen, on Feb. 27, and again on Mar. 10; two bursts of full song were heard on the latter date (G.W., see also *B.B.*, 38, 255). Inner London, two in Fetter Lane, E.C., Sept. 11-13 (F.J.H.).



**162. Blackcap.**

M. E. Twickenham, on Jan. 30, a male was seen, at 5-6 feet range, feeding on tinned beef and cereal which had been placed in a half coco-nut shell suspended in a back garden; the bird, of which a satisfactory description has been given, came again to the shell on Jan. 31, Feb. 1, Feb. 12 (when it fed on animal fat) and Feb. 22 (R.R.E.).

**163. Whitethroat.**

M. Inner London, one in St Paul's churchyard on May 19 (D.D.H.); Temple Garden, one on May 7 (E.M.), and two by Temple Church on Aug. 20 (H.B.).

**174. Mistle-Thrush.**

M. One came into a house in Elm Tree Road, N.W., on June 19 and took food from a table while observer was in the room (H.R.K.).

**182. Ring Ouzel.**

S. Wimbledon Common, J.A.W. saw three on Apr. 2, 1944; he had a good view of one bird whilst it was perched and clearly saw the well-defined gorget; there were no other white fleckings or markings. This is the twelfth occurrence in the London Area since 1924.

**186. Wheatear.**

Passage through the Area lasted from Mar. 19 (Brent Res., T.B., W.A.W.) to May 8 (Ponders End S.F., L.J.D.) in the spring, and from July 9 (Feltham, E.O.H.) to Sept. 15 (Crip-plegate, A.G.H.) in the autumn.

**197. Whinchat.**

- E. Sewardstone, a pair with one young on July 25 (W.A.W.).  
Lea Valley, two pairs bred at Nazeing (A.C.W.); a bird seen carrying food near Waltham Abbey on July 25 (W.A.W.).  
H. Borehamwood, three pairs just off the Barnet By-Pass, one nest found, on May 20 (E.R.P.). Broad Colney, a pair by a gravel pit on May 20 (E.R.P.). Cheshunt, four, including three males, at a gravel pit on May 28, and a male carrying food on June 13 (W.A.W.).  
M. Nested at Edgware (one pair, F.C.B.), Mill Hill (five pairs, E.H.W.), and Ponders End S.F. (at least two pairs, L.J.D.). Inner London, one in Temple Hall on Sept. 10 (H.B.).

**198. Stonechat.**

- E. Leyton Marsh, a pair with two young on May 11 (L.J.D.).  
M. Northolt, a pair with two or three young on May 27 (T.B.).  
S. Ham Common and Richmond Park, two pairs in the breeding season (C.L.C., G.C.L., F.R.M.).

**201. Redstart.**

- B. Black Park, heard singing on May 7 and several subsequent days (C.D.).
- E. Epping Forest, at least eight pairs bred (A.C.W.). Hainault Forest, a male on June 30 (D.C.R.).
- M. Nested at Bushy Park (E.W.P.) and Stanmore (E.H.W.). Hampstead, one flew into the grounds of Heath Lodge on June 3 (V.R.G.). Inner London, one in Temple Hall on Aug. 21 (H.B.).
- S. Nested as usual in Richmond Park; pairs also seen at Limpsfield (K.R.C.) and Shirley (F. & F.M.F.) in June.

**202. Black Redstart.**

See p. 25 for 1945 breeding season records.

- S. Beddington S.F., the male seen on Dec. 31, 1944 (*L.B.R.*, 1944, p. 9) was seen again in the same place on Jan. 6 (*C.B.A.*).

**208. Robin.**

- M. Inner London, Temple Church, one on Sept. 25 (H.B.).

**220. Swallow.**

- E. Early date, one at Romford on Mar 30 (F. & F.M.F.).
- M. Late date, one near Enfield on Nov. 19 (H.H.S.H.).

**222. House-Martin.**

- M./S. Two albino birds were seen about Hampton and Sunbury, Middlesex, between July 19 and Aug. 7: the birds were pure white except for the bill, which appeared to be dark brown or black, according to the light; they are reported to have nested in The Avenue, Sunbury (E.W.P.). A pure white bird was seen at Fetcham Ponds, Surrey, on Aug. 4 (H.J.B.). Late date, one seen at close range on Dec. 3 at Mill Hill (P.L.S.).

**223. Sand-Martin.**

- H. Colney Heath, hitherto unrecorded colony of c. 80 occupied nests at a gravel pit near Parkgate, June 30 (E.R.P.).
- M. Early date, one over the Brent Res., Mar. 18 (E.R.P.).

**227. Nightjar.**

- E. Epping Forest, seen with fully fledged young on Aug. 3; the eggshells were still in the nest (C.E.B.).
- S. Nested at Limpsfield (K.R.C.), Farleigh (H.E.P.), and probably on Arbrook Common (K.P.K.). Kingston Hill, one roosted on branch of a tree in a garden on Sept. 13, 14 and 15; at about 7.50 p.m. each evening (c. 20 minutes after sunset) it flew off into Richmond Park (D.A.R.).

**232. Hoopoe.**

- S. One found with broken legs and body injuries on a garden lawn in Kingston on June 10 died the next day (F.C.D.).

(Satisfactory details of identification have been received. Trolley bus wires run nearby and the bird had probably struck these.)

**233. Roller.**

K. On Jan. 31, one was seen perched on a post by the side of the R. Ravensbourne at Deptford. This is the first occurrence in the London Area (H.S.K., see also *B.B.*, 39, 120). In view of the unusual place and date the possibility of its being an escape cannot be excluded.

**235. Green Woodpecker.**

M. In the cold weather early in the year a Green Woodpecker was watched burrowing through the snow to reach the grass on a lawn in Hampstead: the depth of the hole was subsequently found to be  $3\frac{1}{2}$  in. from the surface of the snow to the grass (Mr Spencer per V.R.G.).

**238. Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.**

M. Inner London, Kensington Gardens, present in spring and summer (E.M.N.).

**239. Wryneck.**

K. Early date, Mar. 31, one heard at Barnehurst (W.B.). Bexleyheath, one on Apr. 2 (W.B.). Ravensbourne, one on Apr. 14 and 15 (J.S.S.B.).

M. Ealing, Apr. 24, one watched for a quarter of an hour on the lawn of a private house, within six feet of French windows (R.H.S.).

S. Nested at Chipstead (C.B.A., L.I.C.) and Limpsfield (K.R.C.). One of the adult birds at Chipstead killed, by giving it a sharp blow on the neck, one of the more backward young when it endeavoured to take food from the parent soon after leaving the nest (L.I.C.).

**249. Little Owl.**

M. Inner London, one in Regents Park on Jan. 26 (W.J.L.S.).

**261. Hobby.**

K. On Aug. 14, T.B., who is familiar with the species, saw a Hobby fly past a train in which he was travelling near Swanscombe. He states "it was probably within 30 yards and its appearance, like a large grey Swift, left no doubt as to its identity. The wings were too long, pointed and narrow for any other hawk."

M. Staines Res., one on Sept. 9 and Oct. 7 (B.A.R., W.G.T.).

**262. Merlin.**

S. Walton Heath, a male on Jan. 7 (H.B.).

**263. Kestrel.**

M. Again often seen in all parts of Inner London. On May 29 three were seen flying up to church tower in Rood Lane, E.C., and investigating a small shutter (L.J.J.).

**268/9. Buzzard (species not determined).**

- E. Epping Forest, two seen at Sewardstone on Mar. 18 (P.F.C.R., A.C.W.).
- S. Selsdon, on Jan. 7 two were seen over the woods near Croham Hurst, where two Common Buzzards (269) were seen in 1943 (F.F.).

**277. Sparrow-Hawk.**

- M. Inner London, eleven records in April and Oct.-Dec. from Regents Park, St James's Park, Kensington Gardens, Covent Garden, Curzon Street and St James's Street. One picked up in Smithfield about Nov. 30 was taken to the Zoo (G.M.V.).
- S. Amongst the food remains found, on Aug. 26, in the nest of a Sparrow-Hawk was the lower mandible of a Hawfinch (K.R.C., see also *B.B.*, 39, 64).

**289. Common Heron.**

Two new heronries were located in the Area; see p. 23 for an account of these and for census results at the other heronries.

**304. White-fronted Goose.**

M. Brent Res., one immature from Feb. 4 until Mar. 11 (T.B., T.L.B., G.C.L., G.W.). The bird was extremely tame, allowing an approach to 10-15 yards; it was full-winged and flew easily and well but, according to G.W., it appeared to suffer from some injury as one foot dangled down in flight. St John's Wood, 15 grey geese, five of which came down close enough to be identified as White-fronted, flew over Lord's cricket ground in a N.N.E. direction at 10.50 a.m. B.S.T. on Feb. 7 (H.R.K.). Mrs Rait-Kerr wrote to *The Times* about these geese and heard from correspondents that geese had also been seen in flight over Dormansland and Guildford, Surrey, and Much Hadham, Herts, on the same day, Feb. 7. These places are all outside our Area, but it is interesting to note that Guildford, St John's Wood and Much Hadham are very nearly in a straight line; those over Dormansland and Guildford were seen in the morning (over Guildford at 9.30 a.m.), and those over Much Hadham at 6.15 p.m.

**314. Canada Goose.**

S. None bred at Gatton Park in 1945; during the war the park was used by troops and the geese have decreased (G.W.P.).

**315. Sheld-Duck.**

- M. Brent Res., two drakes on Feb. 5 (T.L.B.).  
 S. Merstham, a drake on a flooded field on Oct. 2 (C.W.G.P.).  
 T. Barn Elms Res. and Thames at Hammersmith, two (in flight) on Jan. 27 (E.O.H.); one on Jan. 31, Feb. 2 and 3 (B.A.R., E.M.W.).

**318. Gadwall.**

- E. Sewardstone G.P., one on Aug. 13 (W.A.W.).  
 M. Brent Res., a drake, Aug. 16-23 and Sept. 6-10 (T.B.). Feltham G.P., one on Mar. 18 (E.O.H.).  
 S. Beddington S.F., two on May 15 (L.I.C.).  
 T. Lonsdale Road Res., a brood of four on July 6 (T.B., W.R.P.). Max., Barn Elms Res., 17 on Jan. 28 (B.A.R.); Lonsdale Road Res., 19 on Sept. 26 (T.B.).

**322. Garganey.**

- M. Feltham G.P., a pair on Mar. 18 and a pair (drake in eclipse) on Aug. 26 (E.O.H.).

**323. Wigeon.**

- B./M. R. Colne, near Harefield, three on Jan. 27 (T.B.).  
 E. King George Res., one on Oct. 20; c. 19 on Dec. 8 (P.F.C.R.). Sewardstone G.P., two on Mar. 24, 3-4 on Aug. 13 and two on Sept. 5 (W.A.W.).  
 H. Colney Street, two pairs on R. Colne on Mar. 31 (E.R.P.). Elstree Res., 11 on Dec. 27 (E.H.W.).  
 M. Brent Res., seen until Apr. 23 (max. 23 on Jan. 20), and again from Sept. 10 to the end of the year (max. 30 on Dec. 19) (T.B.). Staines Res., max. c. 100 on Dec. 30 (A.J.T.).  
 S. Wimbledon Park, four in Nov. and Dec. (J.A.W.). Molesey Res., max. 25 on Feb. 18 (W.J.L.S.).  
 T. Recorded in Jan. and Feb. on the Thames from Hammersmith to Kew; max. 10 at Lonsdale Road Res. on Feb. 10 (G.C.L.).

**325. Pintail.**

- K. Ruxley G.P., Foots Cray, a drake on Dec. 9 (F.J.H.).  
 M. Ruislip Res., a drake on Dec. 8 (F.C.B., W.R.P., W.G.T.). Staines Res., a drake on Dec. 22 (J.S.C.).  
 T. Barn Elms Res. and Thames from Hammersmith to Kew, a drake on seven occasions in Jan. and Dec. (T.B. and others). Kew, two on Feb. 2 (E.M.W.).  
 Correction: *L.B.R.*, 1944, p. 11, one on Apr. 22 (K.A.L., R.H.S.) should read one on Jan. 22 (R.H.S.).

**326. Shoveler.**

- E. Sewardstone G.P., two on Aug. 6 and one on Aug. 13 (W.A.W.).  
 M. Brent Res., a drake, Apr. 11-15 (T.B.), and a duck on Aug. 16 (T.B., R.W.H.). Staines Res., max. 269 on Sept. 2 (A.J.T.).

- S. Molesey Res., two on Sept. 10 (W.J.L.S.).  
 T. A drake on the north bank of the Thames at Fulham on Jan. 28 (B.A.R.). Barn Elms Res., two ducks on Nov. 25 (B.A.R.).

**328. Common Pochard.**

- E. Nested at Sewardstone G.P.; a duck with three young seen on May 25 (W.A.W.). This is the first breeding record for Essex in the London Area.

**330. Tufted Duck.**

- E. Sewardstone G.P., two pairs nested (W.A.W.).  
 H. Colney Street, at least two pairs nested on Old Parkbury G.P. (J.S.C., E.R.P.). Chorley Wood, one recovered on July 28 had been ringed in St James's Park, London, on Apr. 1, 1944 (*B.B.*, 38, 350).  
 M. Feltham G.P., one pair nested (E.O.H.).  
 S. Mitcham, a duck with eight downy young on July 17 (J.A.W.).

**331. Scaup-Duck.**

- M. The tame drake (see *L.B.R.*, 1943, p. 12, and 1944, p. 12) was seen on the lake in St James's Park on Jan. 18 and Feb. 22 (E.O.H.), Apr. 6 (E.M.N.), and again from Dec. 17-23 and on Dec. 28 (G.C.L., W.G.T.). A duck, which did not consort with the male, was seen at the same place on Jan. 3 and 18 (E.O.H.), and on Dec. 27-8 (W.G.T., E.O.H.). Kensington Gardens, a pair frequented the Round Pond from Feb. 4 until Mar. 27 (G.C.L.), and a female was seen there on Dec. 12, 26 and 29 (G.C.L., E.G.P.).  
 T. R. Thames near Chiswick Eyot, a duck on Feb. 5 (T.B.).

**332. Goldeneye.**

- E. King George Res., an immature male on Nov. 25 (W.A.W.).  
 Walthamstow Res., an immature male on Jan. 20 (W.A.W.).  
 M. Staines Res., first seen on Oct. 28; max. 22 on Dec. 30 and 31 (many observers).  
 T. Kew, a drake on Jan. 1 (R.H.S.). Hammersmith Bridge, one on Jan. 31 (L.I.C.). Putney, two flying down river on Jan. 31 (B.A.R.). Barn Elms Res., a duck on Nov. 25 (B.A.R.).

**339. Common Scoter.**

- M. Brent Res., a duck on Nov. 9 (T.B., W.A.W.).

**342. Goosander.**

- E. King George Res., two on Jan. 13 (P.F.C.R.), and two drakes on Apr. 16 (W.A.W.), two on Dec. 8 (P.F.C.R.). Sewardstone G.P., three on Dec. 8 (A.C.W.).  
 H. Two at a gravel pit near Cheshunt on Dec. 17 (H.H.S.H.).  
 M. Brent Res., one on Dec. 19 (T.B., W.A.W.). Staines Res., first seen on Nov. 9, max. 56 on Dec. 29 (H.R.K., A.J.T. and others). Littleton Res., two drakes on Feb. 2 (W.J.L.S.).

- S. Island Barn Res., two on Jan. 28; Molesey Res., c. 100 on Jan. 29, over 320 on Feb. 2, during spell of very cold weather, but down to 21 on Feb. 18; c. 70 in early Dec. (W.J.L.S.).
- T. Barn Elms Res. and Thames from Hammersmith to Kew, recorded from Jan. 1 to Mar. 3, max. 25 on Feb. 11.

**344. Smew.**

- B./H. One on R. Colne, near Harefield, on Jan. 27 when adjacent gravel pits were frozen over (T.B.).
- E. Walthamstow Res., three on Jan. 5 (P.F.C.R.), 60 (including c. 15 drakes) on Jan. 15 (L.J.D.), two on Jan. 20 (W.A.W.); a drake on Apr. 15 (F.C.B.) and a drake and a red-headed bird on Apr. 22 (L.J.D.).
- M. Brent Res., present from the beginning of the year to Mar. 13, max. 14 on Feb. 28; again seen from Nov. 28 to the end of the year, max. 8 on Dec. 19 (many observers). Feltham G.P., seen up to Mar. 3, max. 14 on Feb. 18 (E.O.H.). Ruislip Res., a drake on Dec. 8 (F.C.B., W.R.P., W.G.T.). Staines Res., seen from Dec. 8 to the end of the year, max. 14 on Dec. 8 (many observers). Upper Sunbury Res., one on Jan. 2, 31 (12 drakes) on Jan. 3, and 32 (7 drakes) on Jan. 9; seen again from Nov. 23 to the end of the year, max. 55 (19 drakes) on Dec. 27 (E.W.P.).
- S. Island Barn Res., 7 on Jan. 28; Molesey Res., over 40 on Jan. 29, but none on Feb. 2 (cf. Goosander, same date); c. 60 in early Dec. (W.J.L.S.).
- T. Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road Res. and Thames from Hammersmith to Kew, recorded from Jan. 20 to Feb. 14, max. 23 on Feb. 11 (many observers). Barn Elms Res., a drake on Dec. 25 (R.W.Hn.).

**346. Cormorant.**

- E. King George Res., one on Dec. 8 (P.F.C.R., W.A.W.) and two on Apr. 4 (A.C.W.).
- H. Rickmansworth, three at gravel pits on Sept. 8 (J.S.C.).
- M. Brent Res., five on Apr. 8 (T.B.). Hampton Filter Beds, one found dead on Dec. 19 had presumably been drawn through the outlet from the reservoir to the filter house by the strong suction; it was very plump and in good condition, and was judged to be in its second winter (E.W.P.). Staines Res., one on various dates from Sept. 23 to the end of the year (many observers). St James Park, one on three dates in Sept. and on Oct. 1 (F. & F.M.F., E.O.H.).
- S. Molesey Res., one on Jan. 29; four very high in soaring and circling flight on July 22, and four on Sept. 10 (B.A.R., W.J.L.S.).

**348. Shag.**

M. One, first seen on Sept. 27, frequented the banks of the Serpentine in Hyde Park; on Oct. 11 it was found dead, and was identified as an immature female at the British Museum (Natural History); it had a diseased liver (E.McE., G.C.L., L.M., W.G.T.).

**370. Great Crested Grebe.**

E. Sewardstone, probably four pairs nested (W.A.W.).  
 H. Aldenham Res., at least six pairs bred (E.H.W.). Cheshunt G.P., a pair with two young on June 13 (W.A.W.). Colney Street, one pair bred on Old Parkbury G.P. (E.R.P.).  
 M. Bred on three gravel pits near Shepperton (E.O.H.).  
 S. Nested at Gatton Park (four pairs, G.W.P.). Two pairs present on Wimbledon Park Lake during summer, but apparently only one pair nested (C.D., J.A.W.). At Lonsdale Road Res., one pair nested unsuccessfully (G.C.L.).

**371. Red-necked Grebe.**

M. Staines Res., one on Sept. 21 (E.O.H.), Oct. 20 (A.J.T.), Oct. 28 (R.H.R.) and Nov. 9 (T.B., H.R.K.).

**374. Black-necked Grebe.**

M. Brent Res., one from Aug. 6 to Sept. 21 (T.B. and others). Staines Res., in larger number than in pre-war years, from Aug. 12 to Dec. 12, max. 21 on Sept. 20 (many observers). One at a gravel pit near Wraysbury throughout Dec. (P.G.).

**375. Little Grebe.**

M. A pair nested in St James's Park (E.O.H.); this is the first breeding record from the park since 1939.

**380. Wood-Pigeon.**

M. Hampstead, grey squirrels destroyed a Wood-Pigeons' nest and occupied another and converted it to a drey (V.R.G.).

**387. Black-tailed Godwit.**

S. Lonsdale Road Res., four (one still in summer plumage) feeding on mud of nearly empty res., Aug. 19-23 (G.C.L., E.G.P., see also *B.B.*, 39, 30).

**388. Common Curlew.**

E. One heard over Sewardstone on Nov. 23 (P.F.C.R.).  
 H. Colney Street, one on July 8 and 22 (E.R.P.).  
 M. Calls heard at night over Southgate on Mar. 16 (E.R.P.), Acton on May 9 (R.H.S.) and Isleworth on Aug. 9 (E.O.H.). Brent Res., one on Mar. 3-4 (T.B.). Staines Res., three on Nov. 9 (T.B., H.R.K.).



**393. Woodcock.**

- E. Epping Forest, one on Jan. 27 (W.A.W.), and April 10 (D.C.R.).  
 H. Elstree Res., one on May 16 (E.H.W.).  
 M. Bushy Park, two flushed on Dec. 22 (Mr Marlow per E.W.P.). Finchley, one flushed from covert on the golf links on Oct. 8 (S.G.J. per L.J.J.). Hendon, one in hedge-bank near golf links on Jan. 25 (E.H.W.). Kempton Park, one on Nov. 28 (E.W.P.).  
 S. Addington Park, one on Jan. 14; Farleigh, one on Mar. 18 (H.E.P.). Richmond Park, one on Jan. 28, Feb. 3 and 11 (D.A.R.). Bookham Common, two in roding flight at approx. 3 a.m. on May 27 (B.A.R.).

**398. Jack Snipe.**

- M. On Nov. 2 a Jack Snipe, which had been picked up in Islington, was taken to the Zoo; it showed no sign of injury and was in perfect plumage (G.M.V.). Brent Res., one on Feb. 22 and Mar. 11-13 (T.B.); one or more present from Oct. 8 to the end of the year, max. five on Dec. 10 (T.B., J.S.C., R.H.R.). Ruislip Res., one on Jan. 22 (W.R.P.), Jan. 23 (T.B.) and Nov. 13 (T.B.).  
 S. Leatherhead, one on Jan. 20 (P.J.H.). Fetcham Cress Beds, two on Jan. 27 (C.B.A.).

**400. Grey Phalarope.**

- M. Staines Res., two on Sept. 20 (P.A.D.H.) and one, which was seen to pick up a crane-fly, on Sept. 21 (E.O.H.).

**402. Turnstone.**

- M. Brent Res., one on Dec. 9 (J.S.C.).

**403. Knot.**

- M. Staines Res., two on Oct. 7 (B.A.R., W.G.T.).

**404/5. Dunlin.**

- M. Brent Res., one on Aug. 6 (T.B.), about six on Aug. 24 (J.S.C.) and one on Sept. 6 (T.B.). Staines Res., the mud exposed when the south res. was drained was a great attraction to Dunlin, and other waders; one was seen on Aug. 30, 1-2 on two dates in Sept., and 1-12 on three dates in Oct.; the peak numbers were seen in Nov., especially between the 9th and 23rd, with maxima of over 40 on the 9th and 35-40 on the 11th; on Nov. 24 the number had decreased to 10 and 10-12 were seen on three dates in Dec. (many observers).  
 S. Lonsdale Road Res., 1-2 from July 22 to Sept. 2 (G.C.L. and others).

**406. Curlew-Sandpiper.**

- E. Sewardstone G.P., one on Aug. 11 (W.A.W.).  
 M. Brent Res., one on Aug. 24 (J.S.C.).

**407. Little Stint.**

M. Brent Res., one on Sept. 16 (P.R.K.).

**417. Ruff.**

M. Brent Res., a reeve seen on various dates between Aug. 12 and Sept. 21; a ruff and a reeve on Sept. 17 and 21 (T.B., J.S.C., R.W.H.). Staines Res., one on Aug. 16 (T.B., R.H.R.).

**421. Common Sandpiper.**

Passage through the area lasted from May 8 to May 28 in the spring, and from July 6 to Oct. 20 in the autumn.

M. Ashford Gravel Pit, one seen on Jan. 21 and from Mar. 8 to 29 was probably the bird seen up to Dec. 9, 1944 (*L.B.R.*, 1944, p. 15) (E.O.H.).

**424. Green Sandpiper.**

E. King George Res., one on Aug. 4 and 18, and one from Sept. 16 to 21 (P.F.C.R., W.A.W.). Sewardstone G.P., one to five seen on 14 dates between July 18 and Sept. 17 (W.A.W.).

H. Colney Street, two at Old Parkbury G.P. on June 24, an early date (C.B.A., E.R.P.); one at Moor Mill G.P. on July 8 (E.R.P.).

M. Brent Res., one on Aug. 27 (G.W.). Kempton Res., one on Nov. 19-20 (E.W.P.). Staines Res., one to three present from Oct. 20 to the end of the year (T.B. and others).

S. Beddington S.F., one on July 21 (A.G.G.T.).

**431. Spotted Redshank.**

S. Lonsdale Road Res., one feeding with four Black-tailed Godwits from Aug. 20 to 22 (G.C.L., E.G.P.). This is the fifth occurrence in the London Area since 1924.

**432. Greenshank.**

E. King George Res., two on Aug. 18 (W.A.W.). Sewardstone G.P., two on Aug. 13, one on Sept. 22 (W.A.W.).

M. Brent Res., one on Sept. 21 (T.B.). Staines Res., one on Aug. 19 and 22, four on Aug. 29, one on Aug. 30 and Sept. 9, three on Sept. 16 and one on Sept. 19 and 21 (T.B., and others).

**435. Ringed Plover.**

E. Sewardstone G.P., one on July 16 and Aug. 8 (W.A.W.).

M. Brent Res., one to five between Aug. 19 and Sept. 1 (T.B., and others). Mill Hill, two flying over, going south, on Aug. 30 (E.H.W.).

S. Lonsdale Road Res., one to two from Aug. 19 to Sept. 5 (E.G.P. and others).

**438. Little Ringed Plover.**

H. Radlett, two were seen on June 16 on a sandy spit at a gravel pit, but were not seen on six subsequent visits (E.R.P., see also *B.B.*, 39, 13).

M. For the second year in succession a pair nested at a gravel pit near Ashford and reared 2-3 young; the adults were first seen on May 8 and last seen on July 22 (E.O.H., E.R.P., E.G.P.). Another pair nested at a gravel pit near Shepperton; two adults and three young were seen there on July 9 and two young were caught and ringed (E.O.H.). See *loc. cit.*, pp. 12-13, for a fuller account of above two pairs. Brent Res., one on Aug. 18 (T.B.), one on Aug. 23, one, possibly two, on Aug. 24 and one on Aug. 25-27 (J.S.C., P.R.K.).

**440/1. Golden Plover.**

E. Sewardstone, four on Feb. 17 (W.A.W.), 6-30 between Mar. 12 and 15 (P.F.C.R.); 34 on Sept. 10 (A.C.W.), two on Dec. 6 (W.A.W.), 7 on Dec. 9 (P.F.C.R.) and 162 on Dec. 12 (W.A.W.). Waltham Marsh, over 200 on Dec. 30 (H.H.S.H.).

H. Broxbourne, c. 30 by the railway line for about ten days in March (C.D.). Colney Street, four on Dec. 2 (E.R.P.). Hoddesdon, over 50 at Dobb's Weir on Mar. 15 (R.S.R.F.).

M. Inner London, one by the Serpentine in August (L.M.).

M. Mill Hill, several on aerodrome on Oct. 28 (E.H.W.). Staines Res., one on Nov. 3 (P.A.D.H.) and 35 on Dec. 6 (P.G.).

S. Beddington S.F., four with Lapwings on Feb. 14 (G.B.).

**444. Grey Plover.**

M. Staines Res., one on Sept. 27 and Oct. 22 (T.B.) and Nov. 9 (H.R.K.).

**449. Lapwing.**

M. Inner London, one by the Serpentine in August (L.M.).

**452. Oyster-Catcher.**

M. Staines Res., one on Aug. 18 (J.K.H.); one seen at Brent Res. on Aug. 19 (P.R.K.) was possibly the same bird.

**462. Black Tern.**

M. Staines Res., one on Aug. 12 (G.C.L.), five on Sept. 2 (A.J.T.), one on Sept. 8 (F.C.B., D.A.T.M.), two on Sept. 9 (B.A.R.), three on Sept. 13 (E.O.H.), two-three on Sept. 15 (C.D., J.A.W.) and two on Sept. 16 (G.C.L.).

**469. Common Tern.**

H. Rickmansworth, two at Stockers Lane G.P. on Aug. 12 (J.S.C.).

M. Feltham G.P., one on May 9 (E.O.H.); [two Terns seen on Apr. 29 were thought to belong to this species but were not seen close enough for certain identification (E.O.H.)]. Staines Res., one on Aug. 12 (G.C.L.) and Sept. 27 (T.B.).

**471. Little Tern.**

M. Staines Res., one on Aug. 16 (T.B., R.H.R.). This is the first record in the London Area since 1938.

**477. Little Gull.**

M. Staines Res., an immature bird seen on Oct. 22 (T.B., see *B.B.*, 39, 61, for a note on the behaviour of this bird), Oct. 28 (B.A.R., R.H.R.) and Nov. 6 (J.A.W.).

T. Westminster, one seen flying east on Oct. 1 (R.H.R.): observer was going slowly along the embankment in a car, and had the bird in view as it flew parallel, very low, at about 25 yards range; he has given a satisfactory description.

**478. Black-headed Gull.**

M. T. L. Bartlett demonstrated (*L.B.R.*, 1943, p. 19) the interesting fact that Black-headed Gulls ringed in St James's Park or on the Embankment are often recovered, even after a lapse of several years, at the same spot where they were first ringed. This tendency to conservatism in feeding stations is confirmed by the following additional recoveries (*B.B.*, 38, 371):—

Date and Place of Ringing.	Date and Place of Recovery.
18.ii.39—St James's Park .....	23.ii.45—Where ringed.
30.xi.42—St James's Park .....	8.xii.44—Where ringed.
13.xii.42—St James's Park .....	11.xii.44—Where ringed.
26.i.43—St James's Park .....	31.i.44—Where ringed.
	13.xi.44—Where ringed.
16.iii.43—Hammersmith .....	15.i.45—Where ringed.

**484. Scandinavian Lesser Black-backed Gull.**

M. Brent Res., two on Aug. 10 and ten on Aug. 25 (T.B.), one on Sept. 17 (R.H.R.) and two or three on Sept. 20 (T.B.).

T. Hammersmith, one on Feb. 17 (G.B.), c. 10 on Oct. 2 (T.B.) and one on Oct. 27 (R.H.S.).

**485. British Lesser Black-backed Gull.**

Recorded as usual on the spring and autumn passage (max. 35 at Waterloo Bridge, Aug. 24); winter records from Hampton (max. 12 on Nov. 8), Mill Hill and R. Thames at Hammersmith.

**486. Great Black-backed Gull.**

M. Hampton, one on July 27 and two on July 29 and 30 (E.W.P.). M./S./T. Recorded as usual in small numbers in the winter.

**487/8. Glaucous and Iceland Gulls.**

It is regretted that it has not yet been found possible to publish the critical study of past records promised in the 9th Report. Birds considered to be Glaucous Gulls were seen at Hammersmith on Jan. 11 and 21 and Feb. 3, 17 and 21. On Feb. 3 a much smaller bird was also seen.

**491. Great Skua.**

M. One was seen flying in a S.W. direction over Kingsbury on Jan. 15, 1942. It was flying sufficiently low to identify the markings under the wings; the observer, who lives in Skye, is very familiar with the species and has seen, and photographed, them on numerous occasions at their breeding stations (M.E.P.). This is the second occurrence in the London Area since 1924.

**503. Puffin.**

K. During severe weather on Jan. 11 a young female Puffin was caught near the railway embankment at Shoreham (J. M. Harrison, *B.B.*, 38, 279).

**504. Corncrake.**

H. Oxhey, one heard near golf course on June 16 (M.S.).

**509. Water Rail.**

H. West Hyde G.P., one on Jan. 27 (T.B.).

M. Brent Res., one on Nov. 12 (T.B.).

S. Beddington S.F., one on Nov. 17 (A.G.G.T.). Godstone Mill, one on Dec. 16 (J.S.S.B.). Limpsfield, one on Feb. 19 and 20 and Mar. 3 (K.R.C.).

**510. Moorhen.**

E. One seen carrying a small fish, Sewardstone, July 26 (W.A.W.).

M. Two seen feeding on a dead fish, about five inches long, lying in the mud at the side of the Serpentine, Dec. 20 (B.A.R.). B.A.R. also records seeing a young Moorhen pecking at a dead Sparrow and dragging it towards the water, Kensington Gardens, Dec. 14, 1944.

**519. Red-legged Partridge.**

E. Recorded in the breeding season at Sewardstone, Stapleford Tawney and Theydon Garnon (P.F.C.R., W.A.W.).

H. One at Colney Heath on Apr. 22 (E.R.P.).

M. Feltham G.P., a pair seen on Mar. 18, Apr. 29 and May 8 (E.O.H.). Four on Aug. 18 near Horton (A.J.T.). Kemp-ton Park, one on Oct. 18 (E.W.P.). Moor Park, three on Mar. 10 (T.L.B.). Staines Moor, six on Oct. 14 (P.R.K.).

S. Beddington S.F., one in Feb. (A.G.G.T.). Molesey, one on Mar. 18 (B.A.R.). Weybridge, two on Apr. 25 (B.A.R.).

**520. Quail.**

S. West Molesey, one heard calling " quip, quip-ip " for three-quarters of an hour on May 28; the bird was among thick tussocky grass and unfenced standing corn; it was not flushed although the observer was at times within a few feet of it (B.A.R.). This is the third record since 1924 within the Society's Area.

## A Rookery Census of the London Area.

IN the spring of 1945, in connection with the Rook Investigation of the British Trust for Ornithology, a census of the rookeries of the London Area was carried out by members of the London Natural History Society with the aid of members of the Trust. Approximately 90 per cent. of the Society's Area was covered, and arrangements have been made for the balance to be covered in 1946. Publication of the complete results is therefore deferred to a later issue of the *London Bird Report*, but some preliminary figures are given here.

The following table shows the number of Rookeries enumerated, by counties :

County.	No. of Rookeries.	No. of Nests.
Bucks ... ..	11	191
Essex ... ..	138	3512
Herts ... ..	53	1593
Kent ... ..	62	2500 (sic)
Middlesex ... ..	23	473
Surrey ... ..	68	1702
Totals ... ..	355	9971

It will be seen that there are very nearly 10,000 pairs of nesting rooks in the 1277 square miles of the Society's Area, or an average of 8.1 pairs per square mile. The number of rookeries per square mile is 0.28. If the central built-up part of the Area is excluded, by taking only those parts more than 10 miles from St Paul's, these figures become 0.39 rookeries and 10.6 nesting pairs per square mile.

The nearest rookery to St Paul's located in the census was at Lee Green, 6½ miles E.S.E. This is the only rookery remaining in the County of London. The second nearest rookery to St Paul's is at Woodford, Essex (8 miles N.N.E.), and the third at Bromley, Kent (9½ miles S.S.E.). It will thus be seen that a ten-mile radius from St Paul's excludes all but a minute fraction of the breeding rook population of the London Area, and generally speaking rookeries do not appear until the twelve-mile radius is reached. This is particularly interesting when it is remembered that barely 30 years ago there was still a rookery in Gray's Inn, little more than a mile from St Paul's.

Thanks are due to more than 45 observers who took part in the census as follows:—

*Bucks and Middlesex*: R. S. R. Fitter (organiser), T. L. Bartlett, T. H. Bromfield, F. C. Bromley, R. B. Clark, E. O. Höhn, L. James and boys of Greenford County School, E. W. Pearce, E. V. Southam, and D. Whittingham.

*Essex*: W. A. Wright (organiser, for Chingford Branch), C. E. Baker, R. Phillips Dales, G. Fiske, E. B. Pinniger, D. C. Rattenbury, J. H. Richter, E. A. Round, P. F. C. Rumsey, A. Wheeler.

*Herts*: E. R. Parrinder (organiser), M. V. Brian, D. W. Brunwin, T. H. C. Lewis, J. Webster.

*Kent*: R. S. R. Fitter (organiser), N. E. R. Beale, Mrs M. S. Fitter, R. W. Hale, B. Innes and boys of Whitgift School, E. R. Parrinder, and D. Stoyel.

*Surrey*: C. B. Ashby (organiser), H. Bentham, H. J. Burkill, L. I. Carrington, C. P. Castell, P. Flinton, B. Innes and boys of Whitgift School, K. P. Keywood, C. G. Munday, G. Wand Piercy, F. Offen, D. A. Rawlence, B. A. Richards, D. E. Sergeant and boys of Epsom College, A. R. Wilton, N. E. Woods.

R.S.R.F., E.R.P., C.B.A.

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## The Heronries of the London Area.

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THE year 1945 was notable for the discovery of two new heronries in the London Area, one with at least 39 occupied nests at Kempton Park, Middlesex, and one with 5 occupied nests at Little Parndon, Essex. It is almost certain that the Kempton heronry represents a breakaway from Richmond Park, which suffered a serious decline in 1942 due to war-like activities, and that the Parndon heronry is the lost heronry from Hunsdon, Herts, which was last known in 1939.

Credit for the discovery of the Kempton Park heronry, the first colony of more than two nests in Middlesex since the disappearance of the Hampton Court heronry over 50 years ago, goes to Mr E. W. Pearce. It was not located till late June, so that conditions for establishing the true number of breeding pairs in 1945 were unfavourable, but on June 25th E.W.P. counted 52 nests, of which 39 had certainly been occupied, and on November 28th, when the leaves were off the trees, 61 nests were revealed.

In 1942 military activities and tree-felling seriously disturbed the heronry in Richmond Park, the number of breeding pairs falling by 16 to 40. Moreover, eight of these 40 deserted. Concurrently, the heronry at Burwood Park near Horsham, Surrey, was becoming extinct, the numbers falling from 8 in 1941 to one in 1942 and nil in 1943. For a year or two odd nesting pairs of herons were floating about in the neighbourhood; for instance one or two pairs nested on Syon Marsh opposite Kew Gardens each year from 1942 to 1944, and in 1943 a pair also nested on Tagg's Island higher up the river. We now know that in 1942 one or two pairs of herons also came to Kempton Park, which has been inaccessible for military reasons during the war, and that some 20

pairs nested there in 1943 and about 30 pairs in 1944. As the numbers in Richmond Park remained below 40 in each year from 1943 to 1945, it is almost certain that dissident pairs from Richmond, possibly together with a contingent from Burwood Park, after prospecting various sites along the river settled in Kempton Park and throve there. Kempton Park is only  $4\frac{3}{4}$  miles S.W. of Richmond Park and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.N.E. of Burwood Park. For comparison, the distance from Wanstead Park to Walthamstow Reservoirs, whither the bulk of the ancient Wanstead heronry has now shifted, is  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles.

The new heronry represents 10 per cent of the whole heron population of the Thames Drainage Basin, which was 387 pairs in 20 heronries in 1945. Its discovery means that the heron population of the Thames Valley between Kew and Staines has risen from 64 pairs in 1941 to 86 in 1945. For the whole London Area the heron population has risen from 122 pairs in 1941 to 165 in 1945.

Some 12 per cent. of this latter increase is accounted for by a new small heronry, which was found by Mr W. A. Wright at Little Parndon, just inside the boundary of the London Area on April 14th. It contained five nests, four of which were in one very small tree. This almost certainly represents a migration from across the boundary of the Area of the small heronry at Hunsdon, Herts, which no longer exists, but which when last heard of in 1939 had eight or nine occupied nests. Hunsdon is about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles N.W. of Little Parndon.

The established heronries in the London Area were enumerated as follows in 1945:

Walthamstow Reservoirs, Essex: 68 occupied nests (W.A.W., T.B., E.R.P.); this is the highest number yet recorded for this heronry, being an increase of 19 on 1944.

Wanstead Park, Essex: 6 occupied nests, a decrease of 3 on 1944 (W.H.F.).

Richmond Park, Surrey: 39 occupied nests, an increase of 3 on 1944 (D.A.R., W.J.L.S.).

Gatton Park, Surrey: 8 occupied nests, an increase of 3 on 1944 (G.W.P.).

The following table shows the variations in the number of breeding pairs at each heronry in the London Area since 1939:

Heronry.	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
Walthamstow Res.	45	46	49	49	44	49	68
Wanstead Park	13	5	6	8	6	9	6
Richmond Park	61	55	56	40	38	36	39
Burwood Park	16	7	8	1	—	—	—
Kempton Park	—	—	—	1-2	c20	c30	39
Miscellaneous	—	—	1	1-2	2	2	5*
Gatton Park	3	3	2	4	7	5	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>104-6</b>	<b>c117</b>	<b>c131</b>	<b>165</b>

\* Little Parndon.

R.S.R.F., E.R.P., C.B.A.





Plate 2.

*Photo : C. P. Newcomb.*

COCK BLACK REDSTART AT NEST HOLE, LONDON WALL, 1945.



Plate 3.

*Photo : C. P. Newcomb.*

HEN BLACK REDSTART AT NEST HOLE, LONDON WALL, 1945.

## Black Redstarts in the London Area in the Summer of 1945.

IN 1945 Black Redstarts (*Phoenicurus ochrurus gibraltariensis*) bred in Inner London for the sixth year in succession. Two or three pairs nested in the City, but fewer birds were present in the Area generally, only ten singing males in all being reported. An interesting feature is the lateness of the first recorded song of many of the singing males which are not known to have had mates.

A detailed list of records follows:

### Inner London.

**The City of London:** two, or possibly three, pairs nested; 7 or 8 other singing males present, i.e., 9 singing males in all.

*Guildhall-Cripplegate area:* 2-3 pairs bred, 2-3 other singing males, i.e., 5 singing males in all.

First heard, March 22 (H. G. Gould); second cock singing, Apr. 6 (H.G.G.); nest found in hole in wall in ruined basement off London Wall, both parents feeding young, June 22 (H.G.G.); cock, evidently of second nesting pair, seen carrying food, also hen with excreta, near Barbican, June 25 (A. G. Hancock); 4 cocks identified in area, where presence of five considered probable, June 25 (A.G.H.); 3 young flew from London Wall nest, July 4 (A.G.H.); nest located in wall in Rope-maker Street, probably second nest of one of the two known nesting pairs, but possibly of a different pair altogether, July 23 (H.G.G.); nest also suspected in White Cross Street in mid-July (H.G.G.); last record for area, 2 singing on Sept. 18 (R.S.R.F.).

*Fetter Lane-Temple area:* two singing males.

An adult and a first-year male were heard singing in both the Fetter Lane area and the Temple all summer; they were probably both unmated birds ranging over a wide territory. *Temple:* first heard, April 12 (H. Bentham); last heard, June 25 (A.G.H.); both birds were heard together several times. *Fetter Lane:* first heard, April 12 (W. S. Pitt); last heard, July 20 (F. J. Holroyde); a party of four including two young, seen on Aug. 6, and two again on Aug. 10 (E. Mann) were probably wanderers from the Guildhall area. A correspondent of *The Times* reported counting eight black redstarts singing between St Paul's and Fetter Lane on VE Day (May 8), but nobody else had anything like this good fortune, and inquiries have elicited no further details (*The Times*, May 24, 1945).

*St Paul's area:* one singing male.

One was singing from May 25 (F. W. Borman) to June 19 (H.B.).

*Walbrook area:* one singing male.

One was singing from May 17 (H. H. S. Hayward) to July 3 (F.J.H.).

*Mincing Lane area:* one singing male.

One was singing from May 22 (Miss L. J. Johns) to June 24 (G. C. Low).

*Liverpool Street Stn.*

One singing on May 15 was not seen or heard again in spite of daily use of the station (A. Darlington).

### Stepney.

None were seen in last year's breeding area, in spite of careful search (A.D.). One singing opposite the London Hospital, Whitechapel, on Sept. 10, was probably a wanderer from elsewhere (H.G.G.).

**Kensington:** one singing male.

One singing several times behind Kensington Court, June 23 (G.C.L.); one believed seen, Gloucester Road, June 26 (R. Preston Donaldson); one singing, Cornwall Gardens, at the end of June (C. H. B. Grant).

**Holborn.**

None seen in Bedford Row area where one sang in 1944, in spite of regular visits (F.J.H.).

**St Pancras:** one singing male.

One singing in Euston Road on May 21 (E. E. Johnson) was probably the same that was heard several times at University College, Gower Street, from April 16 to mid-June (J. D. Wood).

**Westminster.**

One singing, Savile Row, May 7 and 10 (Mrs M. S. Wathen) may have moved on elsewhere. There is also an unconfirmed report of one frequenting the quadrangle of the Home Office, Whitehall, for some weeks in the spring.

**Outer London.**

**Edmonton:** None were seen in the locality where one sang in June 1944 (L. J. Dosseter).

**Wembley:** None returned to the nest-site in the Palace of Engineering, the beam in question having been destroyed by a flying bomb in August 1944; one was thought to have been heard once on the Palace (G. W. Calvert).

I have to thank the 40 observers whose co-operation has made this report possible.

R. S. R. FITTER.

## Some Recent Observations on Starling Roosts in the London Area.

By E. O. HÖHN, F.Z.S.

**T**HIS note amplifies the information on the subject of London Starling (*Sturnus v. vulgaris*) roosts published by R. S. R. Fitter (1) for the following roosts: Inner London; Duck Island, St James' Park (A.7); Southwark Cathedral and Guy's Hospital (B.12 and B.4); (the ciphers in brackets refer to the coding used for these roosts in Fitter's paper) and a new roost near Feltham, Middlesex.

**The Guy's Hospital Roost.**

Origin: I have found from Mr Baker, a technician in the Medical School since 1900, that the roost in the plane trees in the Hospital "Park" was in use when he first came here. Then, as now, birds stayed the night only in autumn. In 1944 the first flocks arrived in the first week of September, thereafter what I estimate at up to 2000 stayed nightly until November 20th. Mr T. J. Evans of the depart-

ment of Biology tells me that his impression is that at any rate during the last 10 years or so this has been their usual period of visitation.

For 1945 the facts are very different. No flocks of Starlings settled on the hospital buildings until October 8th. They remained "singing" with occasional fighting about for about half hour every evening and then made off in the direction of Southwark Cathedral where about 150 Starlings were seen, well after dusk on October 18th and 19th. The number which *roosted* on the Guy's buildings until October 30th was about 250. Birds were seen to come in from the S.E. and W. in this period.

By October 30th the numbers resting at Guy's was about 300, these left for Southwark Cathedral and some also flew off due E. probably to the Southwark Park roost. The number which actually roosted at Southwark Cathedral had correspondingly risen by this date.

It was not until November 28th that Starlings spent the night on the Guy's Plane trees when their number was not over 200. They continued to do so until about January 3rd. The Southwark Cathedral roost was in use simultaneously with the one at Guy's throughout and also continues to be used now (January 28th), when Guy's has again been deserted. My general impression is that most birds came from a S.E. direction.

Some points of general interest have arisen in these observations. Some of the buildings of Guy's Hospital rise considerably above those of the surroundings and their roofs and particularly Hunt's Tower, which has an open metal superstructure offering footholds to numerous Starlings, seem to be used as resting and assembly places by Starling flocks on their way to other roosts as well as the one immediately beneath. I have no observation which indicates that a similar assembly before outward distribution from the roosts occur in early morning.

Secondly, the numbers using the Guy's roost appear to fluctuate very considerably from season to season. From previous more superficial observations (dating back to 1936) I should say that 1944, with at least over 1000 birds roosting, showed the "normal picture" for this roost.

Fitter (*l.c.*, p. 4) suggests that tree roosts are deserted for building roosts when the trees have lost their leaves. Though this view is theoretically attractive, it does not hold good for the two roosts under discussion. The plane trees in front of Southwark Cathedral were used in both years well after the leaf fall while no Starlings roosted in the trees in the Guy's "Park" in 1945 until practically all leaves had fallen. It seems to me that observations bearing on the connection between de-leaving of trees and the date when Starlings leave specific tree roosts should be extended.

Both at Guy's and at Southwark Cathedral the roosts are shared with a fair proportion of House-Sparrows, both species often perching on the same branches.

I have occasionally in October seen small numbers of Wood Pigeons coming into Guy's with the Starlings' evening flight; these descended to the trees to roost at once, while the Starlings continued their evening assembly on higher points.

It is perhaps of interest that the visitation of Starlings at Guy's is always regarded by the people who work there as a migration. Though this is certainly unlikely in the sense that the birds roosting here are resting while actually on their way from and to distant places, it nevertheless seems to me that more evidence is required before the view put forward by Nicholson (Fitter, *l.c.*, p. 9) that London roosting Starlings are not even in part Continental immigrants can be accepted. Moreover, most British Starlings roost in their nesting holes from January onwards (Bullough and A. Morley, 2 and 3) (this appears also to apply to London Starlings, judging from some preliminary observations communicated to me by Mr E. R. Parrinder) while some London roosts, e.g., the one at Southwark Cathedral, showed no dropping off in numbers up to February 1946.

### The Feltham Roost.

This roost is in willows surrounding a small gravel pit, now used for fishing, lying off a secondary road connecting Ashford and East Bedford (almost exactly 1 mile E.S.E. of Staines Reservoir). This roost appears to be the unlocated large roost suggested by flight-lines to lie between Harlington and Harmondsworth (cf. Fitter, *l.c.*, p. 11) in the Thames Valley.

I first saw Starlings roosting here on September 15th, 1944, when there were about 2000. A fisherman reported that they had that year started to come in early August. According to him the roost has been in use for at least several years and his estimate of the usual numbers is several thousand. It was also in use in 1945. This roost does not appear to be used after about late October, i.e., it is a typical tree roost. At times at least, a subsidiary roost nearby is used, for on June 17th, 1944, 50-100 Starlings were roosting in the osiers of an adjacent pit before the larger roost was in use. The larger roost probably draws off the birds from here later on, as seems to occur in the case of Southwark Cathedral and Guy's Hospital.

I believe a further roost or roosts may exist in the Harlington-Harmondsworth-Heathrow area; there is, for instance, a large reed-bed at a gravel pit near West Bedford.

### The Roost on Duck Island, St James' Park. (Fitter A.7.)

Starlings roosted here in 1944 from April onwards until September 1944 (according to Hinton, the keeper) in spite of attempts made to disturb them. In 1945 they came again in April but the flood-lighting of the Island on V.E. day, May 8th, apparently caused them to desert the roost, as they did not appear subsequently.

#### REFERENCES.

- (1) R. S. R. Fitter. "The Starling Roosts of the London Area." *London Naturalist* for 1942, pp. 3-23, 1943.
- (2) W. S. Bullough. "The Reproductive Cycles of the British and Continental Races of the Starling." *Phil. Trans. Roy. Soc. London*, B. 231, 1942.
- (3) A. Morley. "Rising and Roosting of a Pair of Resident Starlings in Winter and early Spring." *Brit. Birds*, 33, pp. 39-43, 1939.

## Bird Ringing in 1945.

THE Society's returns to the Bird Ringing Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology reflect the restricted opportunities for ringing available to at least one of the ringers who contributed largely to the previous year's total: 310 birds of 42 species were ringed, as compared with 437 birds of 44 species in 1944. It is of interest that this year's total included Little Ringed Plover, ringed within the Society's Area, Wryneck, Fulmar Petrel, Manx Shearwater and Arctic and Great Skuas. The following table analyses the work of the 15 ringers who took part:—

Name of Ringer.	Nestlings.	Trapped.	Total.
C. B. Ashby .....	4	1	5
T. L. Bartlett .....	14	59	73
L. I. Carrington .....	4	—	4
J. E. S. Dallas .....	4	1	5
R. S. R. Fitter .....	1	—	1
E. O. Höhn .....	4	11	15
E. R. Parrinder .....	6	—	6
B. A. Richards .....	7	—	7
P. F. C. Rumsey .....	58	8	66
W. F. Siebert .....	7	4	11
W. J. L. Sladen .....	4	20	24
I. B. Smith .....	4	34	38
A. C. Wheeler .....	19	3	22
C. A. White .....	—	1	1
J. A. Wigzell .....	17	15	32
Total, 1945 .....	153	157	310
Total, 1944 .....	276	161	437

The most numerous species ringed were: Manx Shearwater 53, Black-headed Gull 37, Song-Thrush 25, Tufted Duck 23, Linnet 20, Blackbird 20.

Rings are still obtainable at a cost of 1s per packet of 20 from the Bird Ringing Secretary, R. W. Hale, 6 Grendon Gardens, Wembley Park, Middlesex, who will be glad to hear from any member interested.

R. W. H.

### How to send in your Records.

TO facilitate the task of entering records on the sheets, observers are asked to make use of the special new half-yearly recording sheets, which may be obtained for North of the Thames from Mr E. R. Parrinder, 27 Gwalior House, Chase Rd., N.14, and for South of the Thames from Mr C. B. Ashby, 20 Denmark Rd., Carshalton, Surrey. Please list the species in the order of Witherby's "Check-List," and send in your notes as soon as possible after the end of each half-year (June 30 and Dec. 31). As a rough guide to what to send in, notes on any species not described as "generally distributed" in the "Check-List" in the 1943 *L.B.R.* are most valuable, also definite breeding records of all but the commonest species, and notes of all species in unusual places, such as Inner London. Behaviour notes are not wanted unless they are (a) unrecorded or only rarely recorded, or (b) of special local significance in the London Area. Notes on food or any other factor bearing on the ecology of the London Area are especially valuable.





*The*  
LONDON  
BIRD REPORT

FOR

1946

*No. 11.*

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Price 1s 6d.

PUBLISHED BY THE  
LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,  
THE LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE AND TROPICAL MEDICINE  
KEPPEL STREET, GOWER STREET, LONDON, W.C.1.

DATE OF PUBLICATION. DECEMBER 1947.

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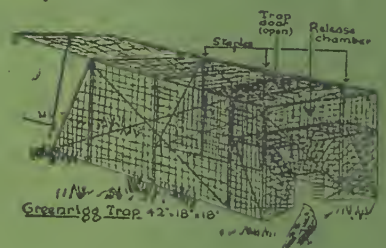


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Plate 1.

*Drawing by R. A. Richardson.*

GREAT GREY SHRIKE.

# The London Bird Report, 1946.

## Introduction.

**T**HIS Report is a compilation of the more interesting and important of the notes on birds in the London Area in 1946 sent in by the record number of 189 contributors—an increase of 62 on 1945. One of the reasons for the delay in publication is the extra work involved in sorting the large amount of material received. All notes sent in, including those not used in the *London Bird Report*, are entered on a permanent card index and form a reservoir of information which will be invaluable in the preparation of the history of the Birds of the London Area from 1900 to 1950, on which the Ornithological Section is now at work. This book will be produced by the Society and will probably be divided into two parts, one dealing with species on county history lines and the other discussing the avifauna of the more typical habitats, migration, the influence of urbanisation and other topics of special relevance to the Area. Bird-watchers who have lived in or visited the Area at any time since 1900 are invited to send to E. R. Parrinder any unpublished notes of interest. Regular contributors to this Report are reminded that our knowledge of the current distribution of many species is still inadequate and the Recorders would like more information, especially breeding records, of the birds whose status is given as "local" in the Check-List of the Birds of the London Area, published in the *London Bird Report* for 1943.

The Society co-operated in several of the enquiries organised by the British Trust for Ornithology and we include Reports, for the London Area, on Black Redstarts and on the census of Great Crested Grebes. There has been a striking increase, since the last census in 1935, in the number of Grebes in the Area, probably mainly due to the excavation of many new gravel pits. There are now well over one hundred gravel pits around London, in varying stages of use and disuse, and they constitute an increasingly important factor in the natural history of our Area.

We are indebted to Dr R. G. Newton and Mr James Fisher for the isopleth map of the rookeries in the London Area, compiled from information supplied by members after the 1945 census. We are also indebted to Mr M. D. England for his two photographs, taken in the London Area, of the only pair of Little Ringed Plovers known to have bred in England in 1946, and to Mr R. A. Richardson for his excellent study of a Great Grey Shrike.

The nesting of Black-headed Gulls at Perry Oaks Sewage Farm was undoubtedly the most important ornithological event of the year. Although the colony, 50-60 strong, was only reported in 1946 it was apparently first started about 1941 or 1942. It may seem remarkable that a colony should become established within twelve miles of St Paul's and remain unobserved for four or five years—no doubt it would have been discovered earlier but for the proximity of the rival bird-watching attractions at Staines Reservoir and Moor! The Sewage Farm, although relatively small, was also visited by some interesting waders on the spring and autumn migrations; a Wood Sandpiper was

seen there in May, a Greenshank in August and a party of ten Ruffs, the largest number ever seen at one time in the London Area, in October.

At least one pair of Hobbies bred within the Area. Hobbies breed fairly regularly just outside the Area but this is the first known occurrence within the boundary. Wood-Larks continued to spread and at least eleven pairs nested; birds frequented Epping Forest for the first time since 1905 and a pair which nested at Stanmore provides the first breeding record for Middlesex since 1928. Other interesting breeding records include two pairs of Pied Wagtails in Inner London and two pairs of Wheatears in piles of bricks on Blackheath.

Among the less common birds seen on passage or in the winter were a Golden Oriole on Wimbledon Common, two Twites at Barn Elms Reservoir (only the second record for the Area since 1924), Great Grey Shrikes at four localities, a Firecrest at Titsey, a Chiffchaff at Ravensbourne on January 24th, a Hoopoe at Weybridge, a herd of sixteen Bewick's Swans at Barn Elms Reservoir in March, Black-necked Grebes in summer plumage at Staines Reservoir from May 15th onwards and an Arctic Skua in the Lea Valley. Waxwings were first seen in the London Area on December 1st and there are several records between then and the end of the year; the main influx, however, occurred in early 1947 and will be summarised in the next *London Bird Report*.

There was an unusually large passage of Black Terns all over the country in the spring. In the London Area the movement started about April 30th and reached its peak on May 11-12; on these two days Black Terns were recorded from seven localities—more than 20 were seen at Stocker's Lake and at least 43 at Staines Reservoir.

Among the birds of prey definitely identified were six Peregrines, a Merlin at Littleton Reservoir, a Hen-Harrier at Kempton Park and a Rough-legged Buzzard at Mill Hill—the first satisfactory field identification of this species in the London Area. Common Buzzards were seen at close range on four occasions and there are also five records of Buzzards seen at too great a height for specific identification. Keepers in Richmond Park saw a large bird of prey with feathered tarsi five times in the early months of the year; it seems probable that this bird was a Rough-legged Buzzard but despite prolonged searches it was not seen by anyone familiar with Buzzards and the description given is inconclusive.

The Records Committee wish to express their thanks to the following observers who have supplied records or other information during the year, and their special thanks to Mrs H. M. Ashby and Mrs W. H. N. Calver for help with entering the records, and to Mr and Mrs D. A. T. Morgan, Messrs M. Ardley, J. A. Bailey, and B. A. Richards for help with checking.

### List of Observers.

Miss E. M. Absalom.	R. S. Ashley.	R. F. Bawtree.
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Mrs H. M. Ashby.	T. L. Bartlett.	Dr C. Bell.

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 H. A. Bilby.  
 Miss B. J. Bird.  
 Miss P. E. Bird.  
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 Miss L. J. Johns.  
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 K. P. Keywood.  
 P. R. Knipe.  
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 Merchant Taylors' School  
 (J. Dupré).  
 Major R. P. Napper.  
 J. S. Neilson (per R.J.R.).  
 E. M. Nicholson.  
 E. T. Nicholson.  
 C. A. Norris.  
 Mrs H. E. O'Neil.  
 Mrs E. D. Parrinder.  
 E. R. Parrinder.  
 T. W. Parrinder.  
 R. T. Parrott.  
 C. H. F. Parsons.  
 E. W. Pearce.  
 M. Peover (per T.L.B.).  
 E. G. Pedler.  
 D. C. Pegram.  
 J. H. G. Peterken.
- H. A. Pettit.  
 W. R. Philipson.  
 G. W. Piercy.  
 K. Piercy.  
 K. S. Pitt  
 (per E. J. Hosking).  
 W. S. Pitt  
 (per E. J. Hosking).  
 A. C. G. Poore.  
 H. E. Pounds.  
 Miss D. Powell  
 (per F.M.G.).  
 D. Powell.  
 Mrs I. Purdom.  
 Miss M. Purdom.  
 R. J. Raines.  
 B. A. Richards.  
 Dr J. S. Rivers.  
 J. B. Roston (per E.R.P.).  
 P. F. C. Rumsey.  
 Mrs E. N. Rutter.  
 R. H. M. Ryall.  
 Miss M. G. Sanday.  
 Miss M. Scholey.  
 R. T. Sherborn.  
 J. M. Simister.  
 P. E. L. Simmonds.  
 Dr W. J. L. Sladen.  
 J. A. Smeed.  
 R. H. Smith.  
 R. P. Smith.  
 K. J. Spencer.  
 Dr J. Stafford  
 (per R.S.R.F.).  
 W. D. Sturrock.  
 J. Taylor.  
 W. G. Teagle.  
 A. G. G. Thompson.  
 A. J. B. Thompson.  
 D. H. Thompson  
 (per T.L.B.).  
 Dr W. W. Thomson.  
 A. V. Tucker.  
 G. H. Underhill.  
 Miss M. S. van Oostveen.  
 R. M. Vernon.  
 C. N. Walter.  
 G. Warburg.  
 R. Ward.  
 Prof. E. H. Warmington.  
 R. B. Warren.  
 M. J. Waterhouse  
 (per R.S.R.F.).  
 Mrs M. L. Wathen.  
 A. C. Wheeler.  
 C. A. White.  
 J. S. Wightman.  
 J. A. Wiggell.  
 R. Wright (per R.S.R.F.).  
 W. A. Wright

## Birds in the London Area, 1946.

### A REPORT ON BIRD LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

FOR an account of the status of all species in the London Area, reference should be made to "A Check-List of the Birds of the London Area" in the *L.B.R.* for 1943. In the present report records of species described in the "Check-List" as being generally distributed have for the most part been omitted.

The number preceding the name of each species refers to Witherby's *Check-List of British Birds* (1941), where the full scientific names will be found. All records refer to 1946, except where otherwise stated. The initials following each record indicate the observer(s) responsible for it. The six counties within the 20-mile radius are indicated by their initials, viz.: B = Bucks; E = Essex; H = Herts; K = Kent; M = Middlesex; S = Surrey. Records on the Thames and its immediate surroundings are put under T. The following abbreviations are also used: *B.B.* = *British Birds* magazine; G.P. = Gravel Pit; *L.B.R.* = *London Bird Report*; Res. = Reservoir; S.F. = Sewage Farm.

#### 2. Hooded Crow.

M. Ruislip, one at Crow's Nest Farm, Oct. 15-17 (J.D.).

S. Beddington S.F., one, presumably the bird recorded in December 1945 (*L.B.R.*, 1945, p. 3), was seen again in Jan. and Feb.; it was joined by another on Feb. 24, after which only one was seen during March and until Apr. 6 (C.B.A. *et al.*); one on Nov. 10 (A.G.G.T.), but not subsequently. Chipstead, one flying over gardens on Jan 6. (L.I.C.). Wimbledon, one flying N.W. on Oct. 28 (J.A.W.).

#### 7. Magpie.

Increased throughout the Area during the war, and is reported to be still increasing, especially in Kent and East Surrey.

K./S. Nested in town gardens at Westerham, Kent (K.R.C.), and Limpsfield, Surrey (M.D.E.). A flock of c.60 was seen at Cudham, Kent, on Dec. 14 and of c.30 at Oxted, Surrey, on Mar. 24 (K.R.C.); a flock of c.20 seen by P.W.E.C. at Headley, Surrey, on Oct. 27 was in the same field as the flock of 27 recorded on Mar. 27, 1938 (see *L.B.R.*, 1938, p. 4).

#### 11. Jay.

M. Inner London, is increasing and spreading in the Central Parks; a family party of five seen in Kensington Gardens on Sept. 12 (W.G.T.); two seen in the Royal Hospital Grounds, Chelsea, on Apr. 6 and breeding suspected (E.M.N.).

S. Battersea Park, a pair seen on Mar. 24 and occasionally thereafter (E.M.N.).



**14. Starling.**

M. Inner London, attempted to breed in Upper Cheyne Row, Chelsea, for the first time since 1938 (E.M.N.); bred in Bloomsbury Square, Russell Square, and Lincoln's Inn (E.H.W.). Starlings can be seen in other parts of Inner London (e.g., Parliament Square) in the daytime, and definite breeding records would be welcome.

**17. Golden Oriole.**

S. Wimbledon Common, a hen or first summer male was seen and heard at close range on June 22 and details of plumage obtained (K.V.E., see also *The Field*, 19.x.46, p. 442).

**18. Hawfinch.**

E. Recorded from Epping Forest in the breeding season; three fledglings seen at Chingford on June 1 (M.P.).

H. Broxbourne, three on Apr. 8 (S.A.). Rickmansworth, one on Apr. 21 (T.L.B.).

M. Bred on Stanmore Common (E.H.W.); recorded in breeding season from Hampstead Heath, Ken Wood, Mill Hill and Whitewebbs Park.

K. Beckenham, single birds flying over in April (G.E.M.). Noted in June at Elmstead Woods and Sundridge Park, where 30-40 were seen on May 1 (J.F.B.). West Wickham, a pair and one young on June 9 (T.R.E.). Sydenham, one on June 21 (L.R.E.).

S. Nested on Wimbledon Common and Putney Heath and at Chipstead, Limpsfield (two pairs), and Farleigh (three pairs). A family party at Selsdon Wood on July 18. Noted in the breeding season at Richmond Park, Esher, Walton Heath and Tadworth; at other times recorded from Ham, Kew Gardens, Richmond Park (8 on Mar. 4) and Roehampton and from many localities along the North Downs from Norbury Park to Limpsfield.

**20. Goldfinch.**

E. Twelve were seen roosting in a reed bed, an unusual situation, at Berwick Pond, Rainham, on Dec. 22 (M.A.).

**21. Siskin.**

E. Epping Forest, 15-20 at High Beach on Mar. 21 (H.B.F.). Hainault Forest, c.15 on Apr. 6 (R.B.W.). Upminster, two on Dec. 26 (M.A.).

H. Chorleywood, c.20 at Troutstream on Dec. 1 (H.J.E.). Little Amwell, c.60 with Redpolls near Haileybury College on Dec. 1 (T.L.B.).

M. Bushy Park, 20-30, on Jan. 9-18, 12 on Mar. 1, c.100 with mixed flock of tits on Mar. 8 (E.W.P.); small flocks from Dec. 10-31 (R.M.). Enfield, small party with Goldfinches in

Whitewebbs Park on Jan. 20 (L.J.J.). Kempton Park, two on Mar. 14 (E.W.P.). Mill Hill, one on Oct. 24 (E.H.W.). Uxbridge, six by Fray's River on Jan. 17 (T.B.).

K. Westerham, one on Mar. 10 and 17 (C.N.W.).

S. Arbrook Common, three on Jan. 12 (K.P.K.) and c.10 on Feb. 17 (J.S.W.). Morden Hall, two on Jan. 2; Mitcham Watermeads, flock of 20-30 on Mar. 2 (G.B.). Reigate Heath, one on Feb. 5 (H.B.). Wimbledon Common, 12-20 on Mar. 31 and April 6-7 (C.D.).

#### 25. Lesser Redpoll.

M. Bred in Stanmore-Harrow Weald area (E.H.W.). Flocks of 50-100 at Uxbridge on Jan. 17 (T.B.) and of 40-50 on Jan. 28 (R.H.M.R.).

K. One pair nested at Orpington (H.B.), and several seen on Chislehurst and Hayes Commons in the breeding season (J.F.B.). Noted in winter at Elmstead Woods, Barnehurst and Westerham.

S. Limpsfield, a pair nested in the centre of the town (M.D.E.). Present in the breeding season at Leatherhead, South Croydon, Tadworth (four pairs) and Walton Heath (five pairs) (H.B., *et al.*).

#### 28/9. Twite.

S. Barn Elms, two feeding on dandelion heads on Oct. 28; head and back brown, streaked black; breast and flanks lighter brown and less streaked, belly white; bill yellow; the rump not seen. The call described as "wheezy, nasal" (S.C.). This is only the second record for the London Area since 1924.

#### 42. Brambling.

E. A flock of over 70 on ploughed land at Sewardstone on Jan. 12 (S.A.).

H. Moor Park, one on Mar. 24 (P.R.K.).

M. Stanmore Common, one on Apr. 19 (E.O.H.). Mill Hill, one on Oct. 24 (E.H.W.).

K. Ravensbourne, one on Mar. 28 (J.S.S.B.). Shooters Hill, c.30 on Dec. 12 (J.F.B.).

S. Chipstead, one on Mar. 23 (L.I.C.). Beddington S.F., one on Mar. 28 (G.B.). Headley, two on Oct. 27 (P.W.E.C.). Tadworth, one on Oct. 11 and Nov. 16 (H.B.). Noted in December at Addington (R.T.P.), Ashtead (R.C.H.) and Titsey (K.R.C.). Walton Heath, two on Dec. 7, c.30 on Dec. 22 and c.50 on Dec. 26 (P.W.E.C.).

#### 43. Corn-Bunting.

No breeding and very few sight records of this species were received for 1946, and more information of its status and distribution in the area would be appreciated.

**49. Cirl-Bunting.**

- S. Betchworth, a pair on Mar. 10 and a singing male on July 13 (C.B.A.). Richmond Park, one on Apr. 19 (F.R.M.). Woodmansterne, one singing on Jan. 5 (L.I.C.).

**62. Tree-Sparrow.**

- E. Nested as usual at Sewardstone (P.F.C.R.). Several breeding colonies located at Chingford (A.C.W.). Reported as fairly common and widespread in the area bounded by Romford, Navestock, Brentwood, and Upminster (R.B.W.).
- H. Bred at Old Parkbury G.P. (E.R.P.) where c.50 seen on Dec. 14 (F.C.B.).
- M. Nested at Brockley Hill (F.C.B.), Hanworth (E.W.P.) and Heathrow Airport (C.A.W.); observed in breeding season at Brent Res., Enfield, Feltham, Hatton, Shepperton, Staines and Twickenham.
- K. The only record for the year is of several at Addington and West Wickham on Jan. 13 (R.T.P.).
- S. Nested at Richmond Hill (E.W.P.), Mitcham Watermeads (G.B.) and Beddington S.F., where a flock of 120 was seen on Nov. 10 (A.G.G.T.). Molesey, a pair on June 1 (P.W.E.C.) and six on June 25 (W.J.L.S.). Botley Hill, 50-100 on Jan. 28—the species is not often seen here (H.F.G.). Wimbledon Common, one on Aug. 4 (B.A.R.). Up to four noted in winter at Richmond Park, Epsom Downs and Leatherhead.

**69. Wood-Lark.**

The Wood-Lark continued to spread as a breeding bird in the Area and there was definite evidence of eleven pairs nesting out of the 17-18 pairs present in the breeding season. Details are given below.

- E. Epping Forest, two, one singing, at Pole Hill on Mar. 27 and two at the same place on four more dates to Apr. 15 (E.T.N.); three at High Beach on May 22 and two on May 25 (S.A.); two, one singing, at Strawberry Hill on June 1 (E.O.H., E.T.N.); three, believed to be immature, at Chingford Plain on Aug. 10 (E.T.N.). This is the first record of Wood-Larks in Epping Forest since 1905. Hainault Forest, as in 1945 (see *L.B.R.*, 1945, p. 5) a pair frequented the forest; one was singing on Apr. 6 (R.B.W.), and on July 7 a nest, with five well grown young, was found in rough grass; the young had left by July 9 and two were seen feeding in the grass whilst the male was singing some 400 yards away (H.B.F.). This is only the third breeding record for Essex since the mid-19th century.
- M. On Feb. 10 J.A.B., who is familiar with the species, heard one singing near Stanmore; on Feb. 24 one was singing from a telegraph pole at the same place, and on Mar. 17 one,

singing in flight, was being followed by another; from Mar. 17 two were seen each week until June 22, when the two adults were seen with three well-plumaged young. On Apr. 9 E.H.W. saw two, one singing, about half a mile to the east; they were not seen again and, no doubt, they were J.A.B.'s birds. This is the first record for Middlesex since 1938 and the first breeding record since 1928, when a pair bred on Stanmore Common.

- S. Richmond Park, three singing males in early spring and at least one, probably two, pairs nested (C.L.C., E.G.P., A.G.G.T.). Ham Common, one singing on Mar. 31 (R.H.S.). Putney Heath and Wimbledon Common, noted from Feb. to Sep.; of four pairs which nested, three hatched two broods, resulting in a total of 24 young fledged (E. & P.S. *et al.*). Oxshott, two singing on Feb. 17 (D.A.T.M.) and one on Apr. 20 (G.B., C.P.C.). Fetcham, a pair and a singing male on Feb. 16 (C.P.C.). North Downs from the Mole valley to Reigate, probably 7-8 pairs, with nesting records from four localities (H.B., L.I.C., J.S.W.) in one of which a flock of 14 was seen on Aug. 25 (F.M.F.). Limpsfield, two pairs bred (M.D.E.). Shirley, five on Sept. 19 (R.T.P.).

**70. Sky-Lark.**

M. Inner London, one over Upper Cheyne Row, Chelsea, on Sept. 27 (E.M.N.); ten in Regent's Park during cold spell, Jan. 2-3 (H.R.K.).

**75. Tree-Pipit.**

M. A pair bred in the vicinity of Ken Wood—this is the first record for Hampstead Heath in thirteen years (V.R.G.).

**81. Rock-Pipit.**

S. Barn Elms Res., one seen twice on April 11 (R.H.M.R.).

**84. Blue-headed Wagtail.**

M. Brent Res., a female (white chin and eye-stripe noted) on May 4 and a male on May 9 (T.B., R.H.M.R.).

**88. Yellow Wagtail.**

E. Nested at Sewardstone as usual (P.F.C.R., A.C.W.).

M. Nesting records from Brent Res. (several pairs), Hampton (four pairs), Feltham G.P. (at least one pair), Hendon (one pair), Mill Hill (two pairs), Staines (c.10 pairs), Twickenham (3-4 pairs). Passage birds at Staines Res. on Aug. 23 were estimated at c.500 but numbers had considerably decreased on Aug. 31 (F.M.F.). Inner London, one in Hyde Park on Apr. 3 (E.M.N.) and Apr. 8 (L.M.); one in Kensington Gardens on Aug. 11 (M.S.O.) and Aug. 15 (L.M.).

S. Barn Elms Res., 5-6 pairs probably bred (R.S.R.F.). Beddington S.F., at least three pairs nested but the cutting of

vegetation disturbed other pairs (A.G.G.T.). West Molesey, two pairs collecting food for nestlings on June 1 (P.W.E.C.); three juveniles on June 25 (W.J.L.S.).

### 89. Grey Wagtail.

- M. Inner London, again many records, from the parks and bombed sites, etc., up to Apr. 2 in the spring and from mid-Sept. to the end of the year, with the peak period in October.
- S. Nested at Epsom S.F. (H.B.), Godstone (F. & F.M.F., H.F.G.), Leatherhead (H.J.B., J.E.S.D.), Limpsfield (M.D.E.) and Morden Hall (G.B., T.A.M.). Noted in the breeding season at Molesey, New Malden, Putney Heath and Walton-on-Thames.

### 90. Pied Wagtail.

- E. Upminster, c.50 roosting in a willow bush at gravel pit on July 24; c.100 roosting in reeds of Gaynes Park Lake on Dec. 19 (M.A.). South Ockendon, c.25 roosting in reeds at gravel pit on Sept. 10 (M.A.).
- M. Inner London, Cripplegate, a pair nested twice in the bombed area near London Wall; the first nest was not found, but the second nest, found on May 22, was placed in the same hole in a basement wall as a Black Redstart used in 1945; this second clutch was of two eggs only, both hatched but the young were later found dead in the nest (R.S.R.F. *et al.*); Cannon Street, a pair seen collecting insects and taking them to a hole in a brick wall on bombed site, Aug. 20 and 22 (G.E.M.).
- S. A pair nested under the roof of the automatic scoreboard in the centre court, Wimbledon, and were feeding young in the nest during the all-England tennis championships! (Sub-Lt. L. Grierson, R.N.V.R., *The Times*, 16.7.46).

### 91. White Wagtail.

- M. Feltham, one at Chatterern Hill G.P. on Apr. 30 (E.O.H.).
- S. Barn Elms Res., one on Apr. 27 (R.C.H., D.A.T.M.) and one on Sept. 27 (G.C.L.). Beddington S.F., one on Oct. 20 (G.B.).

### 96. Nuthatch.

- M. Inner London, one was seen on a fire-escape near Cannon Street, E.C.4., on Aug. 30 (P.W.E.C.).

### 100. Blue Tit.

- M. Inner London, a flock of eleven was seen by E.H.W. in Fetter Lane during a snow-storm on Dec. 19.

### 108. Willow-Tit.

- E. Status as a resident in Epping Forest apparently unchanged (S.A., A.C.W.).

- H. One near Watford on Jan. 17 (T.B.).
- M. Mill Hill, one on Jan. 6 (E.H.W.) and two on Dec. 8 (W.D.M.). Stanmore Common, two on Apr. 2 (E.H.W.). Recorded from Ruislip as usual in winter.
- K. Two near Kemsing on Aug. 25 (R.S.R.F.).
- S. Ashtead Common, one on May 16 (C.D.). Bookham Common, seen in two localities in spring, and a pair feeding one fully-fledged young on June 24; one on Sept. 8 (G.B.). Coulsdon, a pair on Apr. 13 (courtship feeding observed: see *B.B.*, 39, p. 245) and one on June 28 (G.B.) Epsom Common, two in one locality and one in a second on June 25 (G.B.). Limpsfield, noted from Jan. to mid-March and again in October: one singing on May 17 (M.D.E.). Oxshott Common, one on June 27 (G.B.). Walton Heath, two on Dec. 6 (H.B.), and one near Mickleham Downs on Dec. 21 (R.C.H.).

#### 114. Great Grey Shrike.

- E. Loughton, one seen first on Dec. 4 stayed until Dec. 30; a larder with a decapitated robin was found on Dec. 9 (S.A., D.W.G. *et al.*).
- M. Stanmore, one on Dec. 28 but not subsequently (J.A.B.).
- S. Banstead Downs, one on Nov. 4 (R.F.B.) and Dec. 30 (F.M.G.). Banstead Heath and Walton Heath, one on Dec. 6, 15 and 26 (P.W.E.C., D. & D.P.).

#### 119. Red-backed Shrike.

- E. Bred as usual in Epping Forest (S.A. *et al.*) but only one pair bred at Sewardstone (P.F.C.R.). Purfleet, a male on July 20 (R.B.W.).
- H. Radlett, a female near Old Parkbury G.P. on June 23 (E.R.P.). Cockfosters, a male on June 30 (E.R.P.).
- M. Bred at Hilly Fields, Enfield (L.J.J.), Ruislip Common (two pairs, T.L.B.), by Staines Res. (one, possibly two pairs, many observers), and probably near Stanmore, where a pair was seen feeding young out of the nest on June 21-23 (J.A.B.). Recorded in breeding season at Harefield (T.B.), Hendon (E.H.W.) and Littleton (D.A.T.M.). A female and two young birds were watched mobbing a stoat by Staines Res. on Aug. 4 (G.C.L.).
- S. Nested at Cheam (S.H.C., P.W.E.C.), Epsom Downs (H.B., F.M.F.), Ham Common (E.W.P., G.C.L.), Leatherhead (J.E.S.D.), Limpsfield (K.R.C., M.D.E.), Mitcham Common (four pairs, W.W.T.), S. Croydon (two pairs, F. & F.M.F.), Tadworth (five pairs), and Walton Heath (five pairs, H.B.). A pair and two juveniles at Chipstead on Aug. 21 (L.I.C.). In May and June noted on the commons at Ashtead, Bookham, Epsom, and Littleworth.

**120. Waxwing.**

- B. Colnbrook, two, with Redwings and a Blackbird, in hawthorns beside the main road on Dec. 21 and three at the same place the next day (A.V.T.).
- M. West Harrow, two in bushes by the railway on Dec. 18 (N.J.H.) and six at Rayners Lane on Dec. 22 (M.E.P.).
- S. Richmond Park, two on Dec. 1 (D.A.R.) and one on Dec. 4 (P.W.E.C.). Barnes, one in hawthorn by tow-path on Dec. 23 (K.V.E.). A flock of 25 was seen on Dec. 31 and subsequently at Effingham Junction, half-a-mile outside the Society's Area (A.E.H.).

**121. Spotted Flycatcher.**

- M. Inner London, bred in Kensington Gardens (two pairs) and Regent's Park, and probably in St James's Park and Belgrave Square.

**126/7. Goldcrest.**

- E./M./K./S. Recorded as more numerous in winter, especially December, than in recent years.
- M. Inner London, one in Kensington Gardens on July 31 (L.M.), Oct. 25 (W.G.T.) and Nov. 15 (G.C.L.); two on Oct. 28 (W.G.T.) and six on Sept. 8 (J.M.F.L.).

**128. Firecrest.**

- S. Titsey, one feeding on hawthorn bushes on the North Downs on Oct. 13 (K.R.C., see *B.B.*, 40, p. 158).

**129. Chiffchaff.**

- K. Ravensbourne, one on Jan. 24 (J.S.S.B., see also *B.B.*, 39, p. 222).

**135. Wood-Warbler.**

- M. Two pairs bred on Hampstead Heath (H.R.K., V.R.G.). Also reported from Stanmore Common and Whitewebbs Park.
- K. Elmstead Woods, seen throughout the summer (J.F.B.).
- S. Kingswood, three on Apr. 15 (early date); subsequently eight pairs, six nests found; a party of c.15 with Willow Warblers, Spotted Flycatchers, tits, etc., on July 17 (H.B.). Reported also from Bookham and Epsom Commons, Croham Hurst, Limpsfield, Sheen, Shirley, Oxshott Heath and Walton Heath.

**145. Grasshopper Warbler.**

- M. Brent Res., one on May 10 (R.H.M.R.).
- K. Sidcup, a singing male seen on July 10 on a once-private estate now untended (K.J.S.).
- S. Bookham Common, two pairs; one nest and eggs seen (G.B., E.Mc.E.). Limpsfield, two males in usual locality (on which foundations for pre-fabricated houses had been laid), but no females appeared (M.D.E.). Wimbledon Golf Course, one on Apr. 23 (J.A.W.). Shirley, one on Aug. 16 (R.T.P.).

**149. Reed-Warbler.**

- B. Wraysbury, c.6 at a gravel pit on May 5 (W.G.T.).
- E. Two singing at Sewardstone on June 14 (S.A.).
- H. Bred at Elstree Res. (E.H.W.) and Rickmansworth (M.E.P.). Seen at West Hyde in the breeding season (C.A.W.).
- M. Bred at Twickenham (one pair, J.S.W.) and probably at Poyle G.P. (several pairs, W.G.T.). Singing birds recorded in May and June at Brent Res., Staines Moor, Stanmore Common, Syon House Marsh (at least three in June) and Yeoveney.
- K. Greenhithe, two pairs and several singing males on June 4 (W.B.).
- S. Epsom S.F., eight pairs present; two nests found (H.B.). A pair nested unsuccessfully on the south bank of the Thames near Walton (E.W.P.). Singing birds recorded in May and June at Mitcham, Beddington S.F. and Godstone. Two pairs in a pit near Barn Elms on June 7 (G.C.L.).

**162. Blackcap.**

- M. Inner London, one singing in Green Park on May 1 (E.M.N.).

**163. Whitethroat.**

- M. Inner London, one in Hyde Park on Apr. 29 and May 10 (B.A.R.); one in the Temple on May 16 (W.J.L.S.); one near Cripplegate on Aug. 1, 24 and 27 (R.B.W., F.C.B., H.B.F.).

**173. Fieldfare.**

- M. Inner London, a flock of c.12 on Jan. 26 in Green Park (W.G.T.).
- S. Chaldon, a small flock in flight on Sept. 30, an early date (R.S.A.). Mickleham, a very large flock, estimated at 2000-3000, on yew trees on Dec. 15; none was present on Dec. 26 (P.W.E.C.).

**182. Ring-Ouzel.**

- S. Walton Heath, a male seen at 20 yards, and the loud "tac-tac-tac" call heard, on Sept. 30 (H.B.). This is the thirteenth occurrence in the London Area since 1924.

**186. Wheatear.**

- K. Blackheath, two pairs nested in piles of bricks in different parts of the heath. A nest with three eggs located on Apr. 30 was found on May 9 to have been destroyed. The nest of the second pair contained two eggs on Apr. 30 and May 1; both eggs hatched and the young were watched being fed; they were able to fly when last seen, with the parents, on June 2 (J.F.B.). This is the first definite record of breeding in the London Area since 1930.



Passage through the Area lasted from Mar. 24 (Beddington S.F., A.G.G.T.) to May 16 (Romford S.F., H.B.F.) in the spring, and from July 6 (Romford S.F., H.B.F.) to Oct. 3 (Epsom Downs, H.B.) in the autumn.

#### 197. Whinchat.

- E. Walthamstow Res., a pair with one young bird on Aug. 14 (S.A.). Recorded as usual from Sewardstone and Waltham Abbey in the breeding season.
- H. A pair bred on waste ground at Cockfosters (E.R. & E.D.P.). Seen in breeding season at Borehamwood and Cheshunt.
- M. Nested at Mill Hill (at least four pairs, E.H.W.) and Staines Moor (two pairs, G.B., *et al.*). Inner London, Cripplegate, one on May 17 (R.B.W.) and Aug. 27 (H.B.F.).
- K. Erith and Abbey Wood Marshes, four pairs on May 11 (J.F.B.). Stone Marshes, a pair—the male singing—on May 25 (C.B.A.).
- S. Richmond Park, a singing male on May 26 (A.G.G.T.). Wimbledon Common, a pair on Apr. 30, the male singing (J.A.W.).

#### 198. Stonechat.

- M. There was a welcome increase of breeding records in 1946. Kempton Park, a pair feeding three young on June 26 (E.W.P.). Two pairs nested, and probably had two broods, at Mill Hill; the nest of one pair was on the L.M.S. railway embankment in rough grass only 3 feet from the main line permanent way; the other was on waste ground about 200 yards away (E.H.W., E.R.P.). Northolt, a pair nested on waste ground 20 yards from Ruislip Gardens station (C.A.W.). Tottenham, a pair nested on waste ground near Tottenham Hale station (L.J.D.).
- K. Erith and Abbey Wood Marshes, at least two pairs in May (J.F.B.). Dartford Heath, 2/3 singing on May 20 (W.B.).
- S. Richmond Park and Ham Common, a single hen in the nesting season (C.L.C., G.C.L., W.G.T.).

#### 201. Redstart.

- B. Iver, one in garden on Aug. 20 and Sept. 29 (A.V.T.).
- E. Epping Forest, twelve pairs bred in the S.W. part of the forest (A.C.W.). Hainault Forest, one on Sept. 15 (H.B.F.). Weald Park, one singing on May 11; Warley Woods, two singing on June 10 (R.B.W.).
- H. Cuffley Great Wood, three-four pairs on Apr. 22 (E.R.P.).
- M. Bred in Bushy Park (at least 3 pairs, E.W.P.) and on Stanmore Common (at least 4 pairs, E.H.W.). Inner London, a male in Hyde Park on Sept. 5 (R.W.Hn.).
- S. Richmond Park, at least three pairs nested (C.L.C.). Limpsfield, three pairs nested and of these two reared two

broods (K.R.C., M.D.E.). Shirley Woods, one pair nested (F. & F.M.F., R.T.P.).

**202. Black Redstart.**

See p. 35 for 1946 breeding season records.

E. Walthamstow Res., one on Nov. 23 (T.B.).

S. Beddington S.F., a male from Feb. 12 to Mar. 16 (H.B., L.I.C., A.G.G.T.); one on Dec. 27 (A.C.G.P.). Leatherhead, a hen frequenting a copse beside the R. Mole on Mar. 16 (J.S.S.B.).

Correction: The captions to Plates 2 and 3 in *L.B.R.*, 1945, were transposed in printing. Plate 2 is, of course, the hen and Plate 3 the cock.

**208. Robin.**

M. Inner London, Temple, one on Sept. 20 (E.H.W.).

**213. Wren.**

M. Inner London, Cripplegate, one in St Giles' Churchyard on Nov. 5 (R.B.W.); Temple, one on Oct. 16 and Nov. 13 (F.J.H.).

**222. House-Martin.**

H. Elstree, a pair still had young in the nest on Oct. 19 (E.H.W.).

**223. Sand-Martin.**

The following colonies, observed this year, are additional to those named in the note on the distribution of this species in *L.B.R.*, 1940, pp. 16-18 and in subsequent Reports.

E. Small colonies at gravel pits at Aveley and Wennington (R.B.W.), and near Upminster (M.A.).

H. Radlett, several pairs nested in the gravel pit at Moor Mill (E.H.W.); a new colony of 65 nests at Old Parkbury—this pit was opened in Sept. 1945 and was still being dug on June 23, 1946, when the colony was located (E.R.P.).

K. Charlton, a colony of 23 pairs in a sand pit (F.J.H.).

S. Goastone, a colony beside the main road (F. & F.M.F.).

**227. Nightjar.**

E. Epping Forest, four pairs present in the breeding season, two nests found (C.E.B.). Thorndon Park, one heard on June 3 (R.B.W.).

S. Nested at Chelsham (H.E.P.) and Limpsfield (at least three pairs, M.D.E.).

**232. Hoopoe.**

S. Weybridge, one in a garden on Sept. 28/29 (G. S. Mackay, *Country Life*, 11.x.46, p. 678). Streatham, one perched on the roof of a house in the week ending June 30, 1945 (Rev. A. Watkins, *B.B.*, 39, p. 223).

**235. Green Woodpecker.**

M. On Feb. 27, at Mill Hill, one was seen burrowing through the snow covering an ant hill; on examination the snow was found to have been scraped away and a hole  $2\frac{1}{2}$ -3 in. deep bored in the hill (P.E.L.S., see also *L.B.R.*, 1945, p. 11, for a similar incident).

**239. Wryneck.**

M. One at Mill Hill on Apr. 19 (E.H.W.).

K. Bickley, one in gardens on June 7 (F.J.H.).

S. Cheam, one in gardens from Apr. 21 to June 19; it roosted in a nesting-box from which it removed the remains of a Blue Tit's nest, June 16-19 (P.W.E.C.). Chipstead, one pair nested (L.I.C.). Limpsfield, first seen on Mar. 30; M.D.E. reports an intermittent passage from Apr. 3 to early May, up to four being seen in the garden at once. It was possible to listen to a bird approaching from the east and, after anything from half an hour to nearly a day, hear it becoming fainter as it moved westward. The passage birds were more noisy than the summer residents and hence more noticeable. Only once was there evidence of their being paired, when two birds with much chasing and calling visited every nest-box in the garden before passing on. During May and June a solitary bird was watched turning-out nests and eggs of tits, but no mate was noted until July 1, when the pair were visiting nest-boxes (M.D.E.). Only two of the seven eggs laid by this pair hatched and both young fledged (K.R.C., M.D.E.). A second pair nested in the district, but all except one of the young died before leaving the nest. (B.E.B., K.R.C.). Tadworth, of two pairs noted during the breeding season, one nested sixty feet from the ground in a hole in an oak (H.B.). Single birds recorded between April and July from Ashted (J.S.W.), Carshalton (C.B.A.), Carshalton Beeches (P.E.B., M.G.S.) and Shirley (R.T.P.). Oxted, two on Apr. 14 (J.S.W.).

**249. Little Owl.**

M. Inner London, one near Cheapside on Oct. 22 and Nov. 1 (R.B.W.).

**251. Short-eared Owl.**

E. One seen over a marsh near Berwick Pond, Rainham, on Jan. 13 (M.A., A.L.C.), Jan. 26 (M.A., H.A.P.) and Mar. 17 (M.A.).

H. Watford S.F., one on Dec. 24 was being mobbed by crows (A.C.F.).

M. Staines Res., one passed over on Oct. 31 (R.W.Hn.).

S. Leatherhead, one disturbed from rough ground half-a-mile south-east of the town on Oct. 25 was mobbed by Starlings and Blackbirds to tree-top height; it rose higher still when

mobbed by Rooks and Jackdaws and was last seen heading west (J.E.S.D.). Beddington S.F., one on Dec. 26 (A.G.G.T.).

**254. Barn Owl.**

- E. Rainham, two adults seen with three young at Berwick Pond Farm on Sept. 12 (M.A.).
- S. Probably bred on Bookham Common, where one was seen carrying food on Aug. 4 (R.W.Hn.).

**259. Peregrine Falcon.**

- M. Inner London, one over St Paul's Cathedral on Apr. 12 (H.B.); a female twice seen chasing pigeons over Smithfield Market on May 2 (R.J.R., R.W.); St John's Wood, one over Lord's Cricket Ground on Mar. 2 and May 29 (H.R.K.).
- K. Abbey Wood Marshes, one surprised on the ground astride the remains of a pigeon, May 3 (J.F.B.).
- S. Chipstead, one over gardens on Nov. 13 (L.I.C.).

**261. Hobby.**

- M. Heathrow Aerodrome, one swooped upon a party of finches twenty yards ahead of observer on Sept. 15 (C.A.W.). Staines Moor, one on May 12 (R.W.Hn.).
- K. A pair which frequented a golf course and adjoining woods in North Kent seen in April, May, June and August; display flights, of both birds, occurred in April and May (J.F.B.).
- S. A female and three young just able to fly were seen on Sept. 8 (P.W.E.C.) in a locality where an adult or adults were recorded in May, June and August (G.B., *et al.*). In a second locality, 17 miles away, an adult was seen on May 19 by M.D.E., who reports that there is some evidence of a pair having nested in the district, but apparently the eggs were taken. Tadworth, one on May 10 was not seen subsequently (H.B.).

**262. Merlin.**

- M. Littleton Res., a male seen at close quarters on Mar. 23 (D.A.T.M.).

**263. Kestrel.**

- M. Again many records from all parts of Inner London. A pair nested successfully near Dean Lane, E.C., in a hole in the external wall of a bombed building; the young left the nest in early July and on July 8 one attempted to return to the hole but hit the blank wall some ten feet away from it (F.J.H.). Another pair apparently nested in the tower of St. Mary's, Aldermanbury, and young birds were seen in this area at the end of June (K.A.L., *et al.*).
- K. Shoreham, Mar. 23, one took a Redwing which, when released ten feet from the ground, was able to fly away although injured (F.J.H., see also *B.B.*, 39, p. 282).

**268. Rough-legged Buzzard.**

M. Mill Hill, E.H.W. had close views of one over ploughed fields on Dec. 14. It "was never more than 20 feet and generally 3-4 feet up, at times settling on the ground . . . it did not hover but 'halted' in the air several times, giving a slight flutter for a second or two." It allowed close approach and "had a lot of white on it, especially the tail, which was white on the coverts and on the basal parts, with a wide brownish cross-bar; head very whitish with streaks of brown; underparts very pale with ragged streaks on throat and upper breast; the middle breast was quite unmarked, the belly heavily mottled; back and wings brown with faint pale bars on the coverts. Binoculars revealed that the tarsi were feathered down to the claws." This is the first time that this species has been satisfactorily identified in the field in the London Area.

**269. Common Buzzard.**

The following birds were seen at close enough range for specific identification, and satisfactory details have been received for each.

- E. Stifford, one seen, and heard mewing, in the Mardyke Valley on Aug. 5 and 11 (M.A.).
- H. One seen at close range in an oak tree and subsequently in flight in the grounds of Haileybury College, May 16 (D.H.T.).
- K. Abbey Wood Marshes, one on Nov. 3, 1945 (J.F.B.).
- S. Tooting Common, an adult soaring over the swimming baths on July 12 (R.J.R.).

**268/9. Buzzard (species not determined).**

- M. One soaring and circling between Littleton and Staines on Apr. 10 (E.W.P.).
- S. Wimbledon Common, one soaring at a considerable height above the woods on Mar. 26 (G.H.U.). Beddington S.F., one on Apr. 13 (A.G.G.T.). Richmond Park, one circling over on June 2 (G.C.L.).

**273. Hen-Harrier.**

- M. A male over the Racecourse at Kempton Park on Nov. 3; the observer, who is familiar with the species abroad, states "typical harrier flight with wings set at angles in glides; very large pure white lozenge-shaped area on rump, traces of barring on tail; rather a dark grey bird" (J.W.L.). This is the fourth definite occurrence in the London Area since 1924.
- S. [A female or immature harrier hunting over rough ground at Molesey on Oct. 28 had a clear white rump and was probably of this species, but was not certainly identified (B.A.R.).]

**277. Sparrow-Hawk.**

M. Inner London, fourteen records in Apr.-June and Aug.-Dec. from Battersea, Bloomsbury, Earl's Court, Kensington Gardens, Primrose Hill and Regent's Park. On Oct. 23 one was seen pursuing a Grey Wagtail over the Russell Hotel, Russell Square (R.H.S.).

**286. [Black Stork.**

M. One with four Herons at Hampton Hill on Sept. 17 was seen again on the three following days; it was very tame and allowed approach to within eight or nine yards (R.M.). The bird was presumably an escape, although enquiries have failed to elicit information of any missing or released.]

**289. Common Heron.**

E. Walthamstow Res., 62 occupied nests, a decrease of 6 on 1945 (W.A.W., E.T.N.). Wanstead Park, 9 occupied nests, an increase of 3 on 1945 (W.H.F.). The heronry at Little Parndon (see *L.B.R.*, 1945, p. 24) was not counted.

M. The newly-established heronry in Kempton Park (*ibid.*, pp. 23-4) contained 52 occupied nests (E.W.P.); in 1945 39 occupied nests were counted in June but the true total was probably higher as 61 nests were counted when the leaves were off the trees in November.

S. Richmond Park, only 11 occupied nests, against 39 in 1945 and 61 in 1939. Thirty-five old and disused nests remained (C.L.C.). The heronry in Gatton Park was not counted but the numbers were considered to be the same as in 1945, when 8 pairs nested (R.C.H.).

The total for the London Area, excluding Little Parndon, was thus 142 breeding pairs as against at least 160 in 1945—the fall is mainly accounted for by the decrease at Richmond Park being greater this year than the consequent increase at Kempton Park.

**301. Bewick's Swan.**

S. Barn Elms Res., a herd of 16 on Mar. 5 remained until Mar. 7 (G.C.L., E.G.P., see also *B.B.*, 39, p. 219). This is the fourth occurrence in the London Area since 1924.

**312/3. Brent Goose.**

M. Mill Hill, two flying eastwards at dusk, calling, on Feb. 13 (E.H.W.). This record, by an observer familiar with the species, is the fifth for the London Area since 1924.

**315. Sheld-Duck.**

M. Staines Res., one on Feb. 17 (T.B., J.K.H., P.R.K.); three on Aug. 23 and 26 (C.A.W.); fourteen (an unusually large flock for the London Area) on Sept. 1 (T.B.).

S. Island Barn Res., a duck on Feb. 17 (J.W.L.).

**318. Gadwall.**

- H. Elstree Res., a duck and drake on Sept. 1 (J.A.B.).  
 M. Brent Res., one on Apr. 1 (E.H.W.). Staines Res., two on Jan. 16 (A.G.B.), three on Mar. 10 (W.J.L.S., J.R.); one on Aug. 18 (R.H.M.R.), two on Aug. 23 (F.M.F.) and Sept. 28 (J.A.B.).  
 T. Present at all seasons at Barn Elms Res., Lonsdale Road Res., and the R. Thames at Hammersmith; twelve noted on Apr. 8, numbers decreasing to 2/3 pairs by May 20; not recorded in June but three on July 5, increasing to 20/25 in November and December.

**322. Garganey.**

- E. Rainham, a duck and drake were seen at Berwick Pond between June 10 and Aug. 3; their movements suggested breeding but no proof was obtained (M.A., H.A.P.).  
 M. Staines Res., a drake on May 1 (J.R.C.), two drakes and a duck on May 8 (J.A.W.); Staines Moor, a drake on the R. Colne on May 11 (C.B.A., E.R.P.).  
 S. Black Pond, Esher Common, a pair on Mar. 23 (J.S.).

**323. Wigeon.**

- E. King George Res., two on Dec. 16 (P.F.C.R.). Rainham, one on Berwick Pond on Dec. 1 (M.A.).  
 M. Staines Res., five in eclipse on June 29 and July 2 (T.B., *et al.*), three on Aug. 18 (R.H.M.R.). Reported as usual in winter from Brent, Littleton, Stain Hill and Staines Res. and from Staines Moor; max. c. 200 at Staines Res. on Dec. 26 (C.A.W.).  
 S. Molesey Res., present Jan.-Mar., max. 60 on Mar. 3; and Oct.-Dec., max. 48 on Dec. 4 (P.W.E.C., W.J.L.S.).  
 T. River Thames, Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road Res., up to c. 4 pairs in Feb. and Mar., one pair remaining until Apr. 11. Again noted from Oct.-Dec., max. 8 on Dec. 14 (many observers).

**325. Pintail.**

- M. Brent Res., two drakes and a duck on Dec. 21 (J.S.C.) and a duck and drake on Dec. 26 (G.W.). Staines Res., a drake on Mar. 17 (E.Mc.E.), two on Oct. 23 (R.J.R.).  
 T. A duck on the river at Hammersmith on Nov. 30 (J.S.C.) and a drake at Kew on Dec. 23 (K.V.E.). Barn Elms Res., a drake on Dec. 7 and 22 (B.A.R., C.A.W.).

**326. Shoveler.**

- E. Rainham, a drake at Berwick Pond on May 31 (M.A.). Walthamstow Res., four in eclipse on Sept. 12 (J.M.S.).  
 H. London Colney, one on a gravel pit on Sept. 7 (W.D.M.). Watford, a duck and drake at Hamper Mill on Mar. 24 (P.R.K.).

- M. Recorded from Feltham G.P., Littleton Res., Staines Moor and Staines Res. in Apr.-June, but no evidence of nesting (many observers). Autumn max., more than 70 at Staines Res. on Sept. 10 and 15 (C.A.W.).
- S. Molesey Res., ten on Jan. 18, a drake on Mar. 3 and three drakes on June 1; up to c. 30 Oct.-Dec. (P.W.E.C. *et al.*).
- T. Barn Elms Res., noted in Mar., Apr., Aug., Sept. and Dec., max. three drakes and a duck on Mar. 21 (G.C.L. *et al.*).

**327. [Red-crested Pochard.]**

- T. A female at Barn Elms Res., on May 2 was shy but may well have been an escape (R.S.R.F.).]

**328. Common Pochard.**

- H. Attempted breeding suspected, but not proved, at a gravel pit near Colney Street (E.R.P., E.H.W.).
- T. Barn Elms Res., numbers rose from 9 on Sept. 8 to c. 40 in Oct., c. 300 in Nov. and 1160 (counted) on Dec. 24 (E.G.P. *et al.*).

**330. Tufted Duck.**

- H. London Colney, a duck with five young on a gravel pit on Aug. 15 (W.G.T.).
- S. Kew Gardens Lake and R. Thames at Kew, two family parties—the young about one week old—on July 21 (F.J.L.M.).
- M. Three birds ringed in St James's Park were recovered during the year:—  
     Ringed 9.12.44, recovered Canvey Island (32 miles E.)  
     on 25.1.46 (*B.B.*, 39, p. 368).  
     Ringed 20.12.45, recovered Castleford, Yorks (160 miles  
     N.N.W.) on 29.5.46 (*Ibid.*).  
     Ringed 30.1.45, recovered Komi Province, near Yarensk,  
     U.S.S.R., on 3.6.46.

**331. Scaup-Duck.**

- H. Hamper Mill, two drakes and two ducks on Feb. 11, a duck and drake on Feb. 13, and two ducks on Feb. 15 (Merchant Taylors' School N.H.S.).
- M. Brent Res., a duck on Jan. 9 and 12 (T.B.), and on Nov. 30 (F.C.B.). Staines Res., a duck on Jan. 5 (E.R.P.) and two ducks on Jan. 27 (G.C.L.). Kensington Gardens, a duck on Jan. 5 (B.A.R.), Jan. 12 and 13 (A.G.B.) was joined by a drake Jan. 21-26 and the drake only was seen on Jan. 27 and Feb. 3 (A.G.B.); a duck on Dec. 17 (W.G.T.). The tame drake which has frequented the lake in St James's Park for some years was not seen there in 1946.
- S. Two drakes on a gravel pit near Molesey on Apr. 27 and May 5 (B.A.R.).
- T. Lonsdale Road Res., a drake on Mar. 24 (G.C.L.).



**332. Goldeneye.**

- E. King George Res., one on Dec. 16 and 21 (P.F.C.R., A.C.W.) and a duck and drake on Dec. 31 (A.C.W.).
- H. Hamper Mill, a drake on Feb. 4 (Merchant Taylors' School N.H.S.).
- M. Hampton, Grand Junction Res., one to three on most days from Jan. 21 to Apr. 20; Stain Hill Res., one on Jan. 19 and 21 (E.W.P.). Kempton Res., four on Jan. 27; one on Dec. 22 and two on Dec. 28 (J.W.L.). Staines Res., 1-12 from beginning of year to Mar. 10; a duck, drake and immature bird on May 24; 1-20 from Oct. 23 to end of year (many observers).
- S. Molesey Res., up to 7 (not more than one adult drake) from Jan. 18 to Apr. 10; two on Oct. 31; an immature male on Dec. 25 had been seen with two ducks on Dec. 4 (P.W.E.C. *et al.*).
- T. Barn Elms Res., one brown-headed bird on Mar. 2 (D.A.T.M.) and one at Lonsdale Road Res. on Dec. 13 (J.A.W.).

**339. Common Scoter.**

- E. Walthamstow Res., an immature drake on May 8 (J.R.C.).
- M. Brent Res., a duck on Apr. 29 (T.B., R.H.M.R.); three ducks on Nov. 9 (S.C.).

**342. Goosander.**

- E. Connaught Water, one from Nov. 1-11 (A.C.W.). King George Res., three on Dec. 16, two on Dec. 27 and three on Dec. 28 (A.C.W., P.F.C.R.).
- M. Ashford, two flying over a gravel pit on Jan. 27 (W.G.T.). Feltham G.P., one on Jan. 20 and nine on Feb. 6 (E.O.H.). Hampton, four drakes flying over Stain Hill Res. on Jan. 4 (E.W.P.). Kempton Res., three on Jan. 27; one on Dec. 22 (J.W.L.). Littleton Res., three on Mar. 23 (D.A.T.M.). Staines Res., maxima 50 on Jan. 4 and 6 (H.R.K., E.O.H.) and 20 on Dec. 20 (J.S.C.).
- K. Ruxley G.P., a pair on Oct. 27 (F.J.H.).
- S. Molesey Res., present from Jan. to March, max. 70 on Jan. 18; and in Nov. and Dec., max. c. 150 on Dec. 25 (J.W.L., W.J.L.S. *et al.*). Island Barn Res., c. 40 on Dec. 22 (W.J.L.S.).
- T. R. Thames at Kew, Lonsdale Road and Barn Elms Res., present Jan. to March and in December; largest parties 10 on Jan. 12/20 and 12 on Dec. 31 (many observers).

**343. Red-breasted Merganser.**

- M. Staines Res., a drake on Feb. 24 (P.R.K., J.T.).
- T. One on the R. Thames at Shepperton on Dec. 29 (M.D.E.).

**344. Smew.**

- E. King George Res., two on Jan. 18 (A.C.W.); two drakes on Dec. 21 (P.F.C.R.) and two on Dec. 26 (A.C.W.). Walthamstow Res., spring max. 14 on Mar. 8; a red-headed bird on Mar. 29, Apr. 27 and May 6 and two red-headed birds on May 27 and July 16—a very unusual date (L.J.D.); one red-headed bird on Sept. 17 and 1-2 in Oct.-Nov.; Dec. max. 58 (24 drakes) on Dec. 28 (E.O.H.).
- H. Hamper Mill, two on Jan. 27 and 3-6 between Feb. 5-15 (Merchant Taylors' Sch. N.H.S.).
- M. Brent Res., red-headed birds present up to Feb. 18, max. 5 on Feb. 8 (K.V.E. *et al.*); one drake on Dec. 26 (W.D.M., G.W.). Feltham G.P., two on Feb. 6 and four (two drakes) on Feb. 16 (E.O.H.). Hampton, Grand Junction Res., 15 on Jan. 1, 26 on Jan. 2 and 7 on Jan. 3; Stain Hill Res., two on Jan. 2, five on Jan. 3 and three on Mar. 18 (E.W.P.); eight on Dec. 30 (H.F.G.). Kempton Res., seven on Dec. 22, one on Dec. 28 (J.W.L.). Staines Res., seen up to Mar. 10 in spring, max. 48 (21 drakes) on Jan. 23; seen again from Nov. 20 to the end of the year, max. 15 on Dec. 22 (many observers). Southgate, a red-headed bird on the lake in Grovelands Park on Feb. 15, 21 and 22 (E.D.P.).
- S. Molesey Res., 20/25 in Jan. and Feb., and five on Dec. 25 (J.W.L., W.J.L.S.). Twenty-one, of which five were adult males, on gravel pits at West Molesey, Feb. 27 (B.A.R.).
- T. Present at Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road Res. up to Mar. 23, max. 44 (23 drakes) on Jan. 13; coition seen on Feb. 16 at Lonsdale Road Res. (J.S.C.); two red-headed birds on Nov. 29, after which numbers increased during Dec. to c. 80 (c. 30 drakes) at the end of the month (R.C.H. *et al.*).

**346. Cormorant.**

- E. Walthamstow Res., one on Mar. 8 (S.A.); one on Sept. 17 (E.O.H.) and Dec. 15 (L.J.D.).
- H. Rickmansworth, one on Stocker's Lake from Sept. 13-29 (A.C.F.).
- M. Brent Res., six on Aug. 30 (T.L.B.). Littleton Res., one on Mar. 18 (E.W.P.); one on Dec. 8 (R.W.Hn.). Staines Res., one on Sept. 14 and Nov. 23 (F.M.F.). St James's Park, one on Jan. 1 (F. & F.M.F.).
- T. Barn Elms Res., and R. Thames from Putney to Kew, 1-2 between Feb. 10 and Apr. 13 and one on Dec. 22 and 26 (many observers).

**355. Manx Shearwater.**

- S. One found at night, alive, in King's Avenue, Clapham, in mid-September, and taken to the Zoo (R.T.S.). This is the second occurrence in the London Area since 1924.

**370. Great Crested Grebe.**

See p. 32 for an account of the present breeding status in the London Area.

**371. Red-necked Grebe.**

S. Walton Res., two seen on Dec. 21 by R.H.G., who has given a very full and accurate description.

**373. Slavonian Grebe.**

E. Walthamstow Res., one on Sept. 23 (S.A.).

M. Staines Res., two on Oct. 23 (R.J.R.) and Oct. 24 (B.K.M.), one on Oct. 31 and Nov. 3 and 17 (many observers).

The above are the first recorded occurrences of this species in the London Area since 1939.

**374. Black-necked Grebe.**

E. Walthamstow Res., three on May 6 (J.R.C.); one on Nov. 9 (E.O.H.).

M. Brent Res., two on Oct. 13 (R.J.R.). Staines Res., one in summer plumage on May 15 and May 20 and on June 17; six, all in summer plumage, on June 29 then 5-9 seen in every month to November; several birds retained the breeding dress until late Aug. and one was still in almost complete summer plumage on Sept. 14; last seen, one bird, on Nov. 16 (many observers).

T. Barn Elms Res., one on Oct. 19 (C.A.W.).

**375. Little Grebe.**

M. Inner London, again bred in St James's Park (T.L.B.).

**379. Red-throated Diver.**

E. One found dead at King George Res. on Jan. 27 (P.F.C.R.).

**383. Turtle-Dove.**

S. Early date, two at Chipstead on Apr. 16 (L.I.C.).

**386. Bar-tailed Godwit.**

M. Brent Res., two in winter plumage on Apr. 29; one, with some red on breast, on May 9-11 (T.B., R.H.M.R.).

**388. Common Curlew.**

E./M./S. A few records, usually of single birds, at gravel pits, reservoirs, etc., in May and in July, August and September (several observers). Two-three at Beddington S.F., Surrey, on Jan. 27 (G.B., A.G.G.T.). One at Berwick Pond, Essex, on Nov. 16 (M.A.) and one at King George Res., Essex, on Dec. 9 (P.F.C.R.).

**389. Whimbrel.**

- M. Brent Res., one on May 4 (T.B., R.H.M.R.). Mill Hill, one on June 25 flying S.W. (E.H.W.). Staines Moor, six on May 11 flying N. or N.E. (C.B.A., E.R.P.).
- S. Whimbrel calls were heard from a flock of 50-52 birds flying due South over Colley Hill at 5 p.m. B.S.T. on Aug. 24 (P.E.B., M.G.S.).
- T. Barn Elms Res., one on May 4 flew S. (J.R.C.).

**393. Woodcock.**

- E. Epping Forest, one flushed near Loughton Camp on Mar. 3 (C.E.B.); one flew over Manor Road, Loughton, on Dec. 19 (A.C.W.).
- M. Ruislip Woods, one on Aug. 18 (S.C.). Recorded in winter from Brent Res., Hampstead Heath, and Bushy, Kempton and Whitewebbs Parks. Inner London, one seen in Hyde Park on Nov. 6 flew away towards the Bayswater Road (R. L. H. Nunn, *The Field*, Nov. 30, 1946, p. 610)..
- K. Sundridge Park, two on June 25 (J.F.B.).
- S. Tatsfield, one on Apr. 3 and Oct. 10. Limpsfield, two together on Mar. 20; one on Nov. 5 and 12. Godstone, one on Feb. 16 (K.R.C.). Mitcham Watermeads, one on Mar. 2 (G.B.) and one at Beddington Corner on Mar. 17 (T.R.E.). Reigate Heath, one on Apr. 5 (H.B.). Mickleham district, one on Mar 17 (P.W.E.C.) and one on Nov. 3 (A.C.G.P.). Single birds on Wimbledon Common, Oct. 12 (R.W.Hn.), and on Bookham Common, Jan. 12 and Nov. 10 (P.W.E.C.).

**395. Common Snipe.**

- M. Inner London, one flushed from patch of marshy ground on Primrose Hill in early morning of Apr. 12 (K.P.).

**398. Jack Snipe.**

- M. Brent Res., one on Mar. 16; none noted in autumn (T.B.). Stanmore, one on Dec. 15 (W.D.M.).
- S. West Molesey, one on Feb. 17 (B.A.R.). Beddington S.F., two on Jan. 3 and one on Jan. 24 (T.R.E.). Bookham Common, one on Mar. 10 (P.W.E.C., A.R.W.).

**402. Turnstone.**

- M. Brent Res., one in summer plumage on May 14 (T.B., R.H.M.R.). Littleton Res., one on Apr. 30 (E.O.H.).

**403. Knot.**

- M. Staines Res., one, in winter plumage, on May 24 (J.R.C.).

**404/5. Dunlin.**

- E. Dagenham, six at a gravel pit on May 11 (M.A.). Walthamstow Res., one on Aug. 9 and two on Aug. 14 (S.A.).

- M. Brent Res., one on May 3 (T.B.); one on Aug. 3, 9 and 11 (R.W.H., W.D.M., W.G.T.), four on Aug. 23 (F.M.F.) and one on Oct. 20 (J.A.B.). Perry Oaks S.F., three on May 4, ten on Aug. 11 and less than twelve on Oct. 6 (C.H.). Picketts Lock S.F., two on May 8 (J.R.C.). Staines Moor, three on May 7 (E.O.H.) and one on June 29 (G.B. *et al.*). Staines Res., 22 on Jan. 10 (T.B.); one on July 29 and four on Aug. 23 (C.A.W.).
- T. Barn Elms Res., two in summer plumage on May 2 and one on May 17; one to six between Aug. 3 and 16 (T.B., G.C.L. *et al.*).

**406. Curlew Sandpiper.**

- H. Elstree Res., one in summer plumage on May 12 (J.A.B.).

**416. Sanderling.**

- M. One seen at the Brent Res. on Apr. 29 was in winter plumage but with a slight trace of brown on the mantle (T.B., R.H.M.R.). Staines Res., one, in winter plumage, on May 15 (J.R.C.).

**417. Ruff.**

- M. A flock of ten seen by C.H. at Perry Oaks S.F. on Oct. 6 is the largest on record for the London Area.

**421. Common Sandpiper.**

- Passage through the Area lasted from Apr. 13 to May 27 in the spring, and from July 6 to Sept. 22 in the autumn.
- E. Walthamstow Res., one on Nov. 9 and one on Dec. 28 (evidently wintering (E.O.H.)).
- M. Ashford, one seen in Feb. and March at the gravel pit where one wintered in 1944/5 (E.O.H.).

**423. Wood-Sandpiper.**

- M. Perry Oaks S.F., one on May 4 (C.H.).

**424. Green Sandpiper.**

- B. One at Langley S.F. on Nov. 9 (W.G.T.).
- E. Chigwell, two by the R. Roding on Aug. 24 (F.C.B.). Dagenham, one by Beam River on May 12; Hornchurch, three on Aug. 3; Rainham, 1-2 by R. Ingrebourne in April and July, and 1-3 in Nov.; Berwick Pond, one on July 27, two on July 30, one to six on four dates in Nov. and one on Dec. 1 (M.A.). Walthamstow Res., one on Sept. 10 (S.A.).
- H. Rickmansworth, three by Stocker's Lake on Nov. 2 and 3 (J.A.B.). Watford, Cassiobury Park, two by R. Gade on Oct. 26 and one on Oct. 27; one over water-cress beds on Nov. 3 (J.A.S.).
- M. Littleton Res., one on Nov. 3 (C.B.A., G.B.). Perry Oaks S.F., one on Aug. 4 (C.H.). Staines Res., one on Jan. 10 (T.B.).

- K. Westerham, one flying east on July 13 (T.R.E.).  
 S. One at Island Barn Res. on Dec. 22 (W.J.L.S.).

**432. Greenshank.**

- M. Perry Oaks S.F., one on Aug. 4 (G.C.L.), two on Aug. 11 and one on Oct. 6 (C.H.). Staines Moor, one on May 11 (E.R.P.) and May 13 (G.B.); one on Aug. 31 (F.C.B. *et al.*). Staines Res., one on Aug. 23 (C.A.W.) and Sept. 1 (T.B.); one seen on Aug. 31 by several observers was probably the same as the one seen on Staines Moor on the same date.  
 T. Barn Elms Res., one on May 4 (T.B., G.C.L.).

**435/6. Ringed Plover.**

- H. Colney Street, one at Moor Hill G.P. on May 25 and 26 (E.H.W.).  
 M. Brent Res., one on May 3 (T.B.); one on Oct. 16, 19 and 20 (T.B. *et al.*). Perry Oaks S.F., five on May 4; about ten on Aug. 11 and about twelve on Oct. 6 (C.H.). Staines Res., one on Sept. 1 (C.D., R.H.S.).  
 K. Northfleet Marshes, one on Oct. 20 (J.S.S.B.).  
 T. Barn Elms Res., one on Oct. 8 (G.C.L.).

**438. Little Ringed Plover.**

- M. For the third successive year Little Ringed Plovers were present in Middlesex in the breeding season. Four pairs were found, in three localities. One pair is known to have nested, and laid two clutches, but the young from both the nests disappeared immediately after hatching. There is no conclusive evidence that the other three pairs bred. A full account is recorded in *B.B.*, 40, pp. 109-111.

**439. Kentish Plover.**

- M. W. E. Glegg (*B.B.*, 39, p. 319) quotes E. Hartert and F. C. R. Jourdain, *The Birds of Buckinghamshire and The Tring Reservoirs*, 1920, p. 234, "it seems worth recording that G. W. Kerr saw a Kentish Plover at the Stanwell (i.e. Staines) Reservoir, Middlesex, on April 21st, 1915." This is the only record for the London Area.

**440/1. Golden Plover.**

- E. Sewardstone, five on Feb. 25 (S.A.). Waltham Marsh, about 100 on Jan. 17 and Mar. 10 (H.H.S.H.).  
 H. London Colney, some with Lapwings on Oct. 29 and subsequently (W.P.I.). North Mimms, three on Nov. 29 (E.H.W.). Rickmansworth, about 30 near Stocker's Lake on Nov. 10 (D.C.P.).  
 M. Harefield Moor, one on Jan. 17 (T.B.). Heathrow Aerodrome, scattered flocks totalling nearly 100 on Mar. 21 (F.C.B.). Hillingdon, one on Mar. 10 (R.B.W.). Staines



Plate 2.

*Photo: M. D. England.*

MALE LITTLE RINGED PLOVER, MIDDLESEX, 1946.



Plate 3.

*Photo: M. D. England.*  
FEMALE LITTLE RINGED PLOVER AND NEST, MIDDLESEX, 1946.



Res., nine in flight on Jan. 20 (W.G.T.). Stanmore, two flying N.E. on May 11 (J.A.B.).

*Erratum:* By a printer's error one was credited to Inner London in *L.B.R.*, 1945, p. 19, line 22—the entry should be deleted.

K. Blackheath, two flying north on Dec. 22 (J.F.B.).

S. Beddington S.F., four on Mar. 9 (R.H.G.), eleven on Dec. 15 (A.G.G.T.) and ten on Dec. 23 (T.R.E.).

#### 444. Grey Plover.

M. Brent Res., one on Apr. 29 (T.B.). Staines Res., one on Apr. 29 (R.H.M.R.) and two on May 12 (R.W.Hn.).

S. Beddington S.F., one on Mar. 9 with Golden Plover had already attained some black on the face and underparts (R.H.G.).

#### 449. Lapwing.

M. Inner London, Kensington, one alighted by Round Pond on Jan. 15 (L.M.); 15 flying over on Dec. 6 (S.C.) and 6 on Dec. 9 (B.A.R.).

S. Richmond Park, one pair bred in 1944 and 1945, and three pairs in 1946 (C.L.C., E.G.P.). The nesting of this species in the park (see *L.B.R.*, 1943, p. 15) is doubtless a reflection of the continued use of part of the park for agriculture.

#### 452. Oystercatcher.

K. Abbey Wood Marshes. one on Nov. 3, 1945 (J.F.B.).

T. Barn Elms Res., one in flight on Aug. 24 (L.M.) and one flying N.E. at c. 400 feet on Nov. 10 (N.A.B.).

#### 462. Black Tern.

An exceptional passage of Black Terns took place on both the spring and autumn migrations; an account of the spring occurrences in all parts of the country, including the London Area, is given in *B.B.*, 40, pp. 24-26.

*Spring passage:*—

E. Dagenham, one on May 11 (M.A.) and 12 (H.B.F.); Upney G.P., one on May 11 (M.A.). Walthamstow Res., one on May 6 (J.R.C.).

H. Elstree Res., one on May 11 and 12 (E.H.W. *et al.*). Hamper Mill, one on May 9 and three on May 11 (F.C.B.). Rickmansworth, more than 20 at Stocker's Lake on May 11 (A.C.F.). West Hyde G.P., three on May 8 (J. N. Hobbs, *B.B.*, 40, p. 25).

M. Brent Res., three on May 9 (T.B., R.H.M.R.), eleven on May 12 (G.W.) and one on June 9 (T.B.). Charlton Lane G.P., one on May 10 (E.W.P.). Feltham G.P., one on Apr. 30 (E.O.H.). Staines Res., two on May 1 (J.R.C.), four on May 8 (J.A.W.), three on May 9 (J.R.C.), up to 43 on May 12, feeding into a very strong N.E. wind (E.G.P.), 11 on May

13 (G.B., R.W.Hn.), three on May 15 (J.R.C.), six on May 19 (G.C.L.) and one on May 26 (J.K.H.).

T. Barn Elms Res., c. 8 on May 9 (T.B.) and 10 on May 25 (G.C.L.).

*Autumn passage:—*

E. Walthamstow Res., one on Sept. 10 (S.A.) and one on Sept. 17 (E.O.H., J.M.S.).

M. Brent Res., one on Aug. 17 (T.B.). Staines Res., four on Aug. 31, Sept. 1 and 7 (R.W.Hn. *et al.*), three on Sept. 8 (G.C.L.), four-five on Sept. 9 (J.K.H.), three on Sept. 10 (C.A.W.), one on Sept. 14-15 (J.M.S. *et al.*), one on Sept. 21 and 22 (E.O.H., C.A.W.), and one on Oct. 8 and 13 (H.F.G., J.A.W., C.A.W.).

S./T. Barn Elms Res., twelve or more on Aug. 17 during a N.E. gale, one on Sept. 21 and a flock of 18 on Sept. 27 (G.C.L.).

W. Molesey Res., one on Oct. 5 (P.E.B., W.G.S.).

**467. Sandwich Tern.**

M. Feltham, one seen at two gravel pits on Apr. 30 (E.O.H.).

T. Barn Elms Res., two on Sept. 21 (G.C.L., R.P.N.) and two on Oct. 6 (C.H., B.A.R.).

**469. Common Tern.**

M. Staines Res., one on May 12 (C.E.L.).

T. Barn Elms Res., 5 on May 4 (J.R.C.) and c. 8 on May 9 (T.B.). In addition to the above, which were certainly identified, there are some further records of Common/Arctic Terns where specific identification was not possible. In 1947 (as will be recorded in the next *L.B.R.*) there was an exceptional spring passage of Arctic Terns (470), and a number of undoubted Arctics were observed with slight blackish tips to the bill. It is apparent, therefore, that the presence or absence of a black tip, in spring or autumn, is insufficient, by itself, for specific identification and regard should be paid to bill-colour, length of tarsi and tail-streamers, call note and other points of difference.

**471. Little Tern.**

E. Walthamstow Res., one on Sept. 10 (S.A.).

M. Staines Res., one on May 21 (H.B.F.) and an immature bird on Oct. 5 (J.A.B.).

T. Barn Elms Res., three on Aug. 17 (G.C.L.).

**478. Black-headed Gull.**

M. On May 4 Sir Cyril Hurcomb found a breeding colony of Black-headed Gulls at a pond on Perry Oaks S.F. The nests, of which there were 50-60, were among dead rushes and stalks of growing weeds on mudbanks away from the shore. On June 9 many of the young had hatched; on July 28 most of the birds had left but there were three or four juveniles in

the water and two belated chicks, still in down, near one nest. Local inquiries revealed that Black-headed Gulls first began to nest here in the spring of 1941 or 1942, but in much less numbers. (See also *B.B.*, 40, pp. 29-9.) This is the first record of the breeding of this species in the London Area; the nearest colony of Black-headed Gulls is on the Crouch near Fambridge in Essex.

The following recoveries, notified during 1946, of birds ringed in the London Area again emphasise the tendency to conservatism in feeding stations noted in *L.B.R.*, 1943, p. 19, and *L.B.R.*, 1945, p. 20. The first was ringed by W. D. Park, all the others by T. L. Bartlett.

<i>Date and Place of Ringing.</i>	<i>Date and Place of Recovery.</i>
24.ii.40—Westminster .....	19.i.46—Putney.
1.xii.42—Westminster .....	12.xii.46—Where ringed.
2.xii.42—Westminster .....	4.xii.46—Where ringed.
15.xii.42—Westminster .....	18.ii.46—Where ringed.
25.ii.43—St James's Park ...	26.x.46—Leeuwarden, Friesland.
13.iii.43—Westminster .....	9.xii.46—Where ringed.
9.xii.43—St James's Park .....	22.i.45—Where ringed.
	5.xii.46—Where ringed.
13.xii.43—St James's Park .....	11.xii.44—Where ringed.
	13.xi.46—Where ringed.
25.xi.44—Hammersmith .....	13.ii.46—Where ringed.
19.i.46—Putney Bridge ....	5.v.46—Kristianstad, S. Sweden.

#### 484. Scandinavian Lesser Black-backed Gull.

- M. Brent Res., one on Oct. 16 (R.J.R.). Staines Res., two, with 50 of the British subspecies, on Aug. 23 (C.A.W.).
- T. Barn Elms Res. and Thames at Hammersmith, up to four in Feb. and April; one on Oct. 5 and six on Oct. 8; one on Dec. 7 (G.B., T.B., G.C.L., C.A.W.).

#### 487/8. Glaucous and Iceland Gulls.

For the first time in eight years no bird resembling either of these species was reported from the London Area. See p. 31 for a note on the identification of Iceland Gulls.

#### 489. Kittiwake.

- E. One found dead at King George Res. on Dec. 14 showed signs of oiling (P.F.C.R., A.C.W.).
- M. Inner London, one over the Serpentine on Feb. 24, following gales (D.A.T.M.). Staines Res., one found dead on Apr. 9 (T.L.B.).

#### 493. Arctic Skua.

- H. One at a gravel pit in the Lea Valley on May 28; H.B.F. is familiar with the species and noted "narrow light-brown pointed wings with light underparts; black cap, yellowy

cheeks and throat, light breast and belly; impression of having a light patch on each wing; central tail feathers appeared elongated when the tail was fanned. It was beating up and down with hawk-like glides." (H.B.F., W.A.W.).

**509. Water Rail.**

- E. Rainham, Berwick Pond, one on Jan. 26 (M.A., H.A.P.); two, fighting in the reeds, on Nov. 3 and one on Dec. 14 (M.A.). Walthamstow Res., one on Nov. 23 (T.B.).  
 K. Abbey Wood Marshes, one on May 11 (J.F.B.).  
 S. Beddington S.F., one on Dec. 15 (A.G.G.T.). Mitcham Watermeads, two on Dec. 26 (G.B.).

**510. Moorhen.**

- M. One was swimming in a fountain basin in Trafalgar Square on Nov. 15 and was seen to up-end and bring up a small dark slug-like object (A.V.T.).

**517. Pheasant.**

- S. Carshalton, one flushed from a front garden in a built-up area on May 17 (H.M.A.).

**519. Red-legged Partridge.**

- M. Brent Res., two on May 14 (T.B.). Feltham G.P., one on May 7 (E.W.P.) and May 21 (E.O.H.). Staines, one with a brood of c. 10 young on west side of new reservoir on July 14 (B.A.R.).  
 K. Barnehurst, one on Mar. 25 and 26 (W.B.). Dartford, two together on May 23 and 25 (C.B.A., F.C.B.).  
 S. Headley Heath, one on May 21 (H.B.). W. Molesey, one on Oct. 31 (W.G.T.).

**520. Quail.**

- E. On July 26, 1945, W.A.W. saw a small bird, which he at first thought to be a young Partridge, running along a concrete track bordered by rank herbage at Sewardstone G.P. Brief views of the bird were obtained at the same place on six subsequent dates in the next five weeks and the observer concluded that it was a Quail. Details of the head markings, etc., could not be observed but it was noted that the general colouration was a "golden shade" and that, in flight, the tail was dark and not rufous as in the Common Partridge. No apparent change in size was observed and when the bird was last seen, on Sept. 1, it appeared as small as on July 26. (Although W.A.W. was unable to obtain further details of plumage the Records Committee, from their knowledge of the observer's experience, are satisfied that the identification was correct.)





Plate 4.

ISOPLETH MAP OF THE ROOKERIES

SCALE: 1" = 3 $\frac{3}{4}$  miles approx.

OF THE LONDON AREA, 1945.

The marginal numbers refer to the 10 km. squares of the National Grid.

## Glaucous and Iceland Gulls in the London Area.

RECORDS of gulls considered to have been Iceland Gulls (*Larus glaucoïdes* Meyer) have been published in the *London Bird Report* every year since 1939, excepting 1944 and 1945, when definite records were not claimed. In all cases the identification was based on, and checked against, the recognised field characters of the species as published in the standard works of reference. This the records had in common with other published sight records for various parts of the country printed in the reliable journals and local reports. In recent years, however, it has come to be generally realised that the field identification of Iceland Gulls is not so straightforward as was formerly believed. It is now known that the Glaucous Gull (*Larus hyperboreus* Gunn) need not necessarily be larger than a Herring Gull (*Larus a. argentatus* Pont.) and that its wings may, indeed commonly do, extend beyond the tail at rest. As these are the very points by which Iceland Gulls were chiefly "identified" in the past, it is at once apparent that, if these arguments can be substantiated, previous sight records of Iceland Gulls must be reviewed.

Much work is being done by careful observers in the Orkneys and Shetlands, where Glaucous and/or Iceland Gulls are very much commoner than in the London Area. Nevertheless, no paper dealing with the problem and providing a solution has yet appeared, and it can only be assumed that sufficient material is not yet available. It is therefore the policy of the Records Committee, pending the publication of an authoritative re-statement of the position, neither to withdraw nor to attempt to justify the records already published in the *London Bird Report*.

### The Rookeries of the London Area.

IN *The London Bird Report* for 1945 (p. 22), figures were given for the Rook (*Corvus f. frugilegus* L.) population of the London Area, derived from the census of some 90 per cent. of the Area undertaken by the Society in the spring of that year in connection with the Rook Investigation of the British Trust for Ornithology. In 1946 the remainder of the Area was covered, and certain of the districts covered in the previous year were recounted as a check. Only two new rookeries came to light (one in Kent and one in Surrey), which it is reasonably certain were in existence in the previous year. In one of the areas recounted, the Hampton-Sunbury district, two 1945 rookeries were found to have been deserted and three new ones founded; in view of this evidence of the ephemeral nature of suburban rookeries, it was felt unsafe to accept two hitherto unrecorded small rookeries in the area south of Har-

row as having existed in 1945, especially as two others reported in 1945 were not reported in 1946. As a result of the 1946 recounts, it is probably safer to retain the 1945 figures of 355 rookeries and 9971 breeding pairs as minima for that year, with the proviso that, allowing a margin of error for rookeries missed in the census, the true totals are very unlikely to have exceeded 360 rookeries and 10,000 breeding pairs.

The map opposite p. 31 shows the Rook Investigation's data relating to the rook population of the London Area and much of the surrounding country, calculated and mapped by J. Fisher and R. G. Newton according to Newton's smoothing method. It will be seen that the whole inner part of London up to a distance of six to ten miles from the centre is devoid of rookeries, and that this central "rookless" zone is surrounded by concentric belts where the number of nests per square mile rises to 6. After that there appear to be four or five areas of high rook population (over 24 nests per square mile), with associated belts of lower density, which protrude into the Area. These high density areas are found in Essex in the North Weald district, in Kent in the Darent valley and eastwards, in Surrey around Godstone with an inlier in the neighbourhood of Farleigh, and in Hertfordshire near Watford. There are also two small areas where the rook population falls away to zero, situated in south-east Hertfordshire and south-west Middlesex.

C. B. A., R. S. R. F., E. R. P.

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## A Census of Great Crested Grebes in the London Area.

Report by P. A. D. HOLLOM.

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OF all the enquiries of the British Trust for Ornithology one of the most important as regards results is the annual Heronry census. This is the first time that anyone in any country has measured accurately the sort of changes which occur in a bird population over a period of years, and it has provided a number of valuable clues on mortality, the effect of severe weather, speed of recovery, difficulty of building up the population beyond a certain figure, and so on.

It seemed desirable to check some of the new ideas arising from the Heron results by a similar study of another species, and so the Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps c. cristatus* (L.)) sample census was launched by the Trust in 1946. It was hoped that the Grebes in a sample group of counties would be counted completely each year for a period of ten years so as to get a year-by-year picture of the changes in population.

The first season's work was carried out with considerable success and covered an unbroken stretch of country extending from Yorkshire and Lancashire to Surrey and Berkshire, comprising 21 counties. The results of this first year's count over the area studied show that since 1931, when a similar census was carried out, the Great Crested Grebe



population has shifted very considerably, no doubt in part due to disturbances caused by the war. A surprisingly high proportion of old nesting sites have been abandoned and a comparable number of new waters colonised; in some counties the Grebes have decreased, in others increased, in a confusing and apparently inconsistent manner. But nevertheless total numbers show but little change.

Such is the general picture against which to view the L.N.H.S. contribution. In the Society's Area, with the aid of air and ground surveys, many unmapped gravel pits were located and plotted on the National Grid, and a team of 43 observers visited a total of 178 waters (including 123 gravel pits) and found Great Crested Grebes on 95 of them. The results show a big increase in population.

In the breeding season of 1931 there were 225 Great Crested Grebes in the London Area; by 1946 the number had risen to 356 Grebes, or 42 birds per 100,000 acres, thus exceeding the 1931 density in any county, including Norfolk. If Middlesex, where most of the birds were found, is considered by itself, the density has reached the astonishing figure of 69 birds per 100,000 acres, or nearly double that of any other county. The total count, in 1946, for all areas shows a decrease on 1931 of less than 5%, but without the London Area this decrease becomes about 15%. It is thus obvious that the census in the London Area is a vital factor in the interpretation of the figures for the whole sample area.

In the London Area the gravel pits are undoubtedly the chief influence on the Grebe population. Many new pits were dug during the war and the condition of these and of existing ones is continually altering. Those too small are becoming large enough for Grebes; worked-out pits are acquiring a nesting cover growth of reeds and willows; and some of the older pits are being filled in or becoming overgrown and unsuitable for Grebes. Throughout the London Area two waters are now occupied for every one in occupation in 1931—in Middlesex it is 3 to 1. But in spite of this great expansion there are still a number of apparently suitable localities unoccupied, such as some of the gravel pits in Kent, while some of the previously occupied waters in the Surrey portion of the Area are now deserted. Ideally, unoccupied waters as well as those now tenanted should be visited annually if track is to be kept of the changes, and it is hoped that adequate support will be forthcoming to enable this to be done.

We know that over a period of years (1931 to 1946) Grebes have more or less maintained their numbers in the country as a whole. But we are no nearer knowing how they do this. Do numbers build up in "good" years? Is there some ceiling to the population which can hardly be exceeded (as appears to be the case with the Heron)? How long is required to make good a drop in numbers? Is there some sort of reservoir of birds available to colonise desirable new waters, or are these occupied at the expense of existing breeding sites? Is it just by a remarkable chance that total numbers are substantially unchanged in spite of considerable changes in breeding localities? It seems that only a count made every year will solve such questions, and it is interesting

to recall that the sample census made in 1935 suggested that over the country as a whole the number of adults in that year was (within 3%) the same as in 1931, although the figures for the London Area were down about 10%. There are very few other species suited to so thorough a study.

A summary of the 1946 census in the London Area, and a comparison with those of 1931 and 1935, is given below, but its full value may not be apparent until the end of the ten years.

	1931.		1935.		1946.	
	Breeding Pairs.	Total Adults.	Breeding Pairs.	Total Adults.	Breeding Pairs.	Total Adults.
<b>Bucks</b>						
Gravel Pits	2	4	3	6	7	27
Other Waters	—	—	2	4	—	—
<b>Essex</b>						
Gravel Pits	—	—	2	6	5	18
Other Waters	27	80	9	46	2	48
<b>Herts</b>						
Gravel Pits	—	—	5	24	8/9	35
Other Waters	6	12	3	10	9	28
<b>Kent</b>						
Gravel Pits	—	—	—	—	2	5
Other Waters	—	—	—	—	1	3
<b>Middlesex</b>						
Gravel Pits	4	12	5	19	12	91
Other Waters	11	56	5	(35)	3	39
<b>Surrey</b>						
Gravel Pits	—	—	1	7	4	15
Other Waters	18	61	8	(45)	11	47
<b>TOTALS</b>						
Gravel Pits	6	16	16	62	38/9	191
Other Waters	62	209	27	(140)	26	165
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>						
	68	225	43	202	64/5	356

Among the points which these figures bring out are:—

1. An increase of over 50% in the total summer population of Grebes in the area since 1931.
2. The enormous influence of gravel pits. These continue to be dug, and attract an increasing proportion of the Area's Grebes, both nesting and non-breeding birds.
3. A decrease in numbers on "other waters." This decrease was apparent at the 1935 census, especially at the Lea Valley reservoirs, and in spite of recent improvement due to increases at the gravel pits, there are now fewer breeding pairs on all waters combined than in 1931.

4. The exceptionally high proportion of birds reported as non-breeding, which exceed breeding birds by nearly 2 to 1. It will be interesting to see if this proportion falls as gravel pits grow cover and become more suitable for nesting.

Special mention must be made of C. B. Ashby, E. O. Höhn and E. R. Parrinder, who organised the enquiry within our Area, and thanks are due to the following who took part in the census:—H. E. Andrews, M. Ardley, S. Austin, G. Beven, H. A. Bilby, T. Bispham, F. C. Bromley, D. W. Brunwin, Miss R. Buxton, L. I. Carrington, S. Cramp, J. R. Crawford, R. Phillips Dales, C. Dolley, D. H. A. Edwards, H. J. Evans, J. C. Green, E. Gillham, L. F. Harris, J. M. Harrison, F. J. Holroyde, R. C. Homes, K. P. Keywood, T. Lewis, Miss C. E. Longfield, G. C. Low, F. R. Mann, G. E. Manser, D. A. T. Morgan, E. W. Pearce, G. Wand Piercy, D. C. Rattenbury, W. J. L. Sladen, Miss A. D. Synge, W. G. Teagle, A. G. G. Thompson, A. J. B. Thompson, E. H. Warming-ton, C. A. White, W. A. Wright.

## Black Redstarts in the London Area in the Summer of 1946.

THE 1946 breeding season was the seventh successive one in which Black Redstarts (*Phoenicurus ochrurus gibraltariensis*) bred in Inner London. Altogether six pairs were reported, all within the City of London, but only three of these can be proved to have nested. Only three other non-singing males were reported, thus continuing the trend, noticed in 1945, for the number of non-breeding birds to decrease. In 1946, for the first time in twenty-one years, no Black Redstarts were reported from the Outer London area during the breeding season.

The details of the 1946 records follow:

*Cripplegate Area*: Four pairs and one other singing male present, but only two pairs known to have bred for certain.

First heard, March 21 (A.G.H.); one pair and two singing males, April 13 (E.H.W.); four pairs and one singing male, May 27 (R.C.H.); young last seen, Oct. 23; male last seen, Nov. 26 (S.D.H.); several observers reported autumn song.

Five nests were found in this area: (1) Pair feeding young in nest 7½ ft. from ground in ground-floor of building in Aldersgate Street, May 6; these had flown by May 16 (S.D.H.). (2) Nest with five young in isolated ruined building in Jewin Crescent, June 19; these probably flew on June 28 (F.J.H.). (3) Hen sitting on second clutch in same nest, July 18; young hatched by July 30 (F.J.H.); hen feeding young out of nest, August 10 (S.D.H.). (4) Pair feeding young in nest in pipe projecting from wall of basement in Wood Street, May 19 (L.C.); these flew on May 27 (R.C.H.). (5) Nest with five eggs in basement in Monkwell Street, June 21 (F.J.H., E.R.P.); young c. 3 days old, June 27 (E.R.P.); young flew, July 8 or 9 (S.D.H.).

The sites of nests (1), (2) and (3) are so close together as to make it possible that they all belonged to the same pair, and it is therefore not permissible to assume that they belonged to different pairs; moreover, nest (2) was so

late as to make it almost certainly a second brood, so that if it was not the second brood of the pair that built nest (1), both the second nest of pair (1) and the first nest of pair (2), as well as their families out of the nest must have gone unobserved. Three broods have not been recorded before in this country, but are known occasionally on the Continent; the evidence in this case does not, of course, enable three broods to be claimed definitely.

The sites of nests (4) and (5) are also close enough together to make it possible that they were the first and second nests of the same pair. Hence it is not possible to claim that more than two pairs of Black Redstarts actually nested in the Cripplegate Area in 1946. (There was also an unsubstantiated report of a nest in Bridgewater Square, just to the N. of this Area.)

*Fetter Lane Area*: One pair bred. First heard, May 16; hen building, June 24; hen feeding young at nest, July 20; young probably left nest on July 31; last seen Oct. 4 (F.J.H.); a second male heard singing in this area by E.H.W. on June 27 was probably a wanderer from another area; for the multiple nest-building of this pair see *B.B.*, 40, p. 149.

*The Temple*: One pair present, possibly bred. First heard, May 19 (M.P.); hen first seen, June 22 (F.J.H.), when actions of pair suggested possibility of breeding; last heard, July 3 (F.J.H.).

*Cheapside-Cannon Street Area*: One singing male present. First heard, May 2 (E.H.W.); last heard, July 26 (E.G.P.); this may have been a wanderer from the Cripplegate Area, but it was so often heard that, if so, it must have had two regular song-posts several hundred yards apart.

*Mincing Lane-Great Tower Street Area*: One singing male. First heard, May 7 (L.J.J.); last heard, August 18 (C.W.S.).

*Kensington*: [One probable near Holland Park Station, June (M.F.)].

Three passage birds were recorded: a hen in Greenwich Park on March 23-24 and April 6 (J.F.B.), one in Philbeach Gardens, Earl's Court, on April 23 (M.C.), and one in a garden in Fitzroy Road, N.W.1, for ten days around Oct. 10 (J.H.).

I have to thank the 48 observers whose contributions have made this report possible.

R. S. R. FITTER.

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### How to Send in Your Records.

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**T**O facilitate the task of entering records on the sheets, observers are asked to make use of the special new half-yearly recording sheets, which may be obtained for North of the Thames from Mr W. G. Teagle, 20 Wendover Rd., Harlesden, N.W.10, and for South of the Thames from Mr C. B. Ashby, 20 Denmark Rd., Carshalton, Surrey. Please list the species in the order of Witherby's "Check-List," and send in your notes as soon as possible after the end of each half-year (June 30 and Dec. 31). As a rough guide to what to send in, notes on any species not described as "generally distributed" in the "Check-List" in the 1943 *L.B.R.* are most valuable, also definite breeding records of all but the commonest species, and notes of all species in unusual places, such as Inner London. Behaviour notes are not wanted unless they are (a) unrecorded or only rarely recorded, or (b) of special local significance in the London area. Notes on food or any other factor bearing on the ecology of the London area are especially valuable.

## Bird Ringing in 1946.

THE Society's returns to the Bird Ringing Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology show a welcome increase in spite of the shortage of rings and the continuing restrictions on their use. 467 birds of 68 species were ringed, as compared with 310 birds of 42 species in 1945. It is of interest that this year's total includes 19 Black Redstarts ringed in the City area. The following table analyses the work of the 19 ringers who took part:—

Name of Ringer.	Nestlings.	Trapped.	Total.
C. B. Ashby .....	19	5	24
T. L. Bartlett .....	—	15	15
E. A. Blake .....	11	—	11
Miss M. H. Butterworth .....	—	3	3
L. I. Carrington .....	3	—	3
H. J. Evans .....	14	5	19
R. S. R. Fitter .....	12	—	12
E. O. Höhn .....	38	8	46
R. C. Homes .....	11	10	21
W. D. Park .....	—	18	18
E. R. Parrinder .....	61	1	62
B. A. Richards .....	14	—	14
R. A. Richardson .....	18	1	19
J. E. Roberts .....	8	—	8
P. F. C. Rumsey and A. C. Wheeler	62	28	90
W. F. Siebert .....	5	8	13
Miss P. Souter .....	2	—	2
J. A. Wigzell .....	62	25	87
<hr/>			
Total, 1946 .....	340	127	467
Total, 1945 .....	153	157	310

The most numerous species ringed were: Song Thrush 56, Blackbird 43, Lapwing 24, Swallow 22, Linnet 20, Black Redstart and House Martin 19 each.

Ringers should note that the price of rings has had to be increased to 1s 10d per packet. Supplies, however, are now sufficient for the war-time restrictions on ringing to be discontinued. Enquiries about ringing should now be addressed to the new Bird Ringing Secretary, B. A. Richards, 29B St John's Avenue, Putney, S.W.15, who will be glad to hear from any member interested.

R. W. H.

## Field Record Cards.

THE Section has published a List of British Birds for personal use in the field, either within the London Area or outside it. It is a twelve page booklet, pocket size, and lists 309 species and subspecies, with space provided for additions. Columns are provided for recording five outings. The List has many uses and is especially valuable to bird-ringers, as the appropriate ring size is given for each species. The Field Lists cost 4d each (6d to non-members), and can be obtained from D. A. T. Morgan, 4 Drayton Gardens, London, S.W.10. Postage should be included with orders for less than twelve.



*The*  
LONDON  
BIRD REPORT

FOR

1947

*No. 12.*

EDITED BY  
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Price 2s 6d.

PUBLISHED BY  
THE LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,  
THE LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE AND TROPICAL MEDICINE,  
KEPPEL STREET, GOWER STREET, LONDON, W.C.1.

DATE OF PUBLICATION, NOVEMBER 1948.

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### ON SENDING IN RECORDS.

Besides notes on local or uncommon species, records of common birds are valuable where these fill in gaps in our knowledge of distribution, status and ecology, as revealed by previously published records and papers. The annual programme of recording and field work is given in the Recording Circular. This is sent free every December to all regular contributors to the *Report* and to others who ask for it. The Recorders (North of the Thames: W. G. Teagle, 20 Wendover Road, N.W.10; South of the Thames: H. F. Greenfield, 18 Stuart Road, Warlingham, Surrey) will be pleased to send copies on request.

### STATUS REPORTS ON PARTICULAR SPECIES.

Especially for the convenience of our newer readers we give here a list of notes on status published in the *London Bird Report* in previous years. (This is not, of course, a full bibliography of the published work of the Ornithological Section).

In the *L.B.R.* as part of the *London Naturalist* (up to 1935):—

Hawfinch, in *L.N.* for 1934; Lesser Redpoll, 1934; Brambling, 1934; Corn-Bunting, 1933; Tree-Sparrow, 1934; Yellow Wagtail, 1933; Reed-Warbler, 1933; Sedge-Warbler, 1934; Whinchat, 1933; Stonechat, 1933; Redstart, 1935; Great Spotted Woodpecker, 1935; Pochard, 1935; Little Grebe, 1934; Red-legged Partridge, 1933.

In the *L.B.R.* as a separate publication (1936 *et seq.*):—

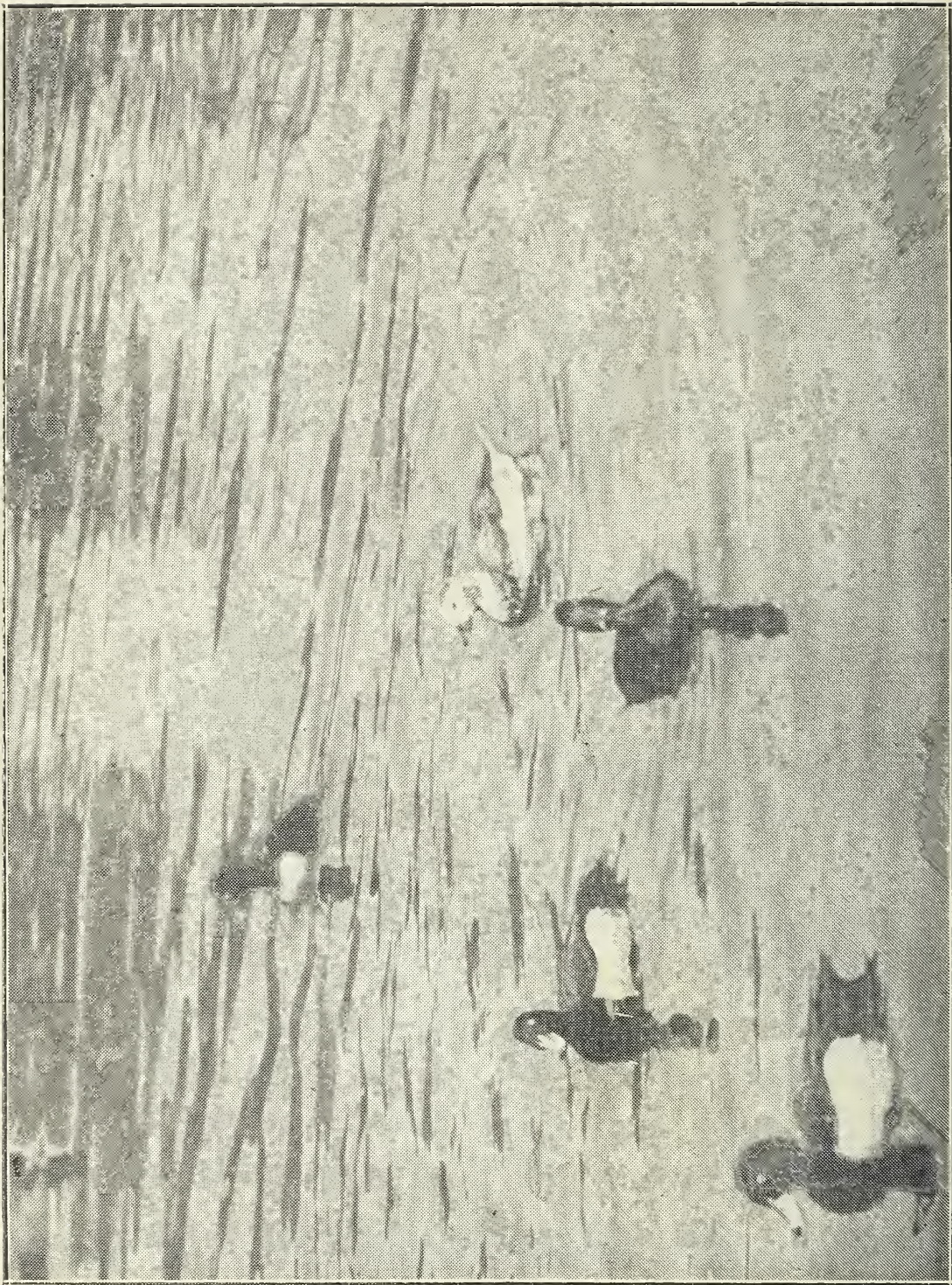
Rook, in *L.B.R.* for 1944, 1945; Magpie, 1937; Goldfinch, 1939; Lesser Redpoll, 1936; Crossbill, 1936; Grey Wagtail, 1936; Red-backed Shrike, 1937; Reed-Warbler, 1938; Black Redstart, 1942-46; Sand-Martin, 1940; Little Owl, 1936; Common Heron, 1945; Teal, 1940; Tufted Duck, 1938; Stock-Dove, 1939; Turtle-Dove, 1938; Great Crested Grebe, 1946; Curlew, 1940; Common Sandpiper, 1939; Redshank, 1939; Coot, 1937.

### GRAVEL-PITS ENQUIRY.

Excavation for clay and gravel has influenced the avifauna of the London Area through the formation of many artificial waters and adjacent waste land. It has been decided to study the bird communities of four gravel-pits in order to put on record the detailed effect of these workings. The enquiry is intended for 1948 and 1949, but it may be possible to publish an interim report in the *L.B.R.* for 1948.







WILD LONG-TAILED DUCK WITH TUFTED DUCKS IN ST. JAMES'S PARK, 1947.  
Photo: R. C. Homes.

# The London Bird Report, 1947.

## Introduction.

**T**HE *London Bird Report* is enlarged this year by eight pages. It is received by each of the 940 members of the Society and its sales outside were last year in the region of 250 copies. Its widening circulation is resulting in more and more notes from a growing number of contributors. This flow of information, which keeps up-to-date our permanent records, is now especially valuable as these will form the basis of the Ornithological Section's projected book on the Birds of the London Area from 1900 to 1950. It is, of course, impracticable to publish in the *Report* all the notes received, and only the more significant are included. The publication of random notes on many of the common species is avoided as this would give a misleading idea of their status and distribution; readers are invited to use the *Report* in conjunction with the 1943 *Check-List of the Birds of the London Area* and the status reports listed on the inside front cover. Records from Inner London are, with a few exceptions, not included this year as they are to be published for the Section in *British Birds*.

Some interesting birds were seen on the gravel bed of the large new reservoir at Staines until it was filled in November. To distinguish these records we refer to it before its filling as Staines New Res., and subsequently as King George VI Res. Walton Res. and the nearby ones known as Chelsea and Lambeth Reservoirs are collectively referred to as the West Molesey Reservoirs. The Littleton Res. of previous issues is known now as Queen Mary Res., this being its correct name as shown on the Ordnance Survey.

The Records Committee cordially thank the following 204 observers for sending in notes and are especially grateful to Miss Elizabeth Burra and L. R. Evans for their help in entering records on the cards; to Miss E. McEwen, Mr and Mrs D. A. T. Morgan, J. A. Bailey and D. C. Pegram for checking; and to Mrs H. M. Ashby, J. F. Burton and F. J. L. Mitchell for other assistance.

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R. Whitlock  
(per H.F.G.).  
A. J. Wigen  
(per T.L.B.).  
J. S. Wightman.  
J. A. Wigzell.  
A. Williams.  
D. M. Williams  
(per T.L.B.).  
B. Wood (per L.I.C.).

## Birds in the London Area, 1947.

### A REPORT ON BIRD LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

**T**HE number preceding the name of each species refers to Witherby's *Check-List of British Birds* (1941), where the full scientific name will be found. All records are for 1947 except where otherwise stated. The initials following each record indicate the observer(s) responsible for it. The six counties within the 20-mile radius are indicated by their initials, viz.:—B = Bucks; E = Essex; H = Herts; K = Kent; M = Middlesex; S = Surrey. Records on the Thames and its immediate surroundings are put under T. The following abbreviations also are used:—*B.B.* = *British Birds* magazine; G.P. = Gravel Pit; *L.B.R.* = *London Bird Report*; Res. = Reservoir; S.F. = Sewage Farm.

#### 2. Hooded Crow.

- E. Walthamstow Res., one on Oct. 26 (H.W.R.) and one to two between Nov. 21 and Dec. 6 (S.A., H.W.R., W.A.W.).
- M. Bushy Park, one on Oct. 24 remained on the edge of a large flock of *Corvidae* and was driven away when it attempted to join them (E.W.P.).
- S. Beddington S.F., one on Feb. 18 (C.F.T.); one from Oct. 30 to the end of the year was not accepted by the Carrion Crow flock for several weeks (C.B.A., H.B., A.G.G.T.). Chelsham, one flying S.W. on Nov. 8 (H.E.P.).

#### 3. Carrion Crow.

- S. A roost of c.175 at the Oaks Estate near Woodmansterne was used (Oct.-Dec.) by a flock of 60/80 from Beddington S.F. (C.B.A.). South Croydon, c.20 roosted regularly in pines during February (F.M.F.).

#### 4. Rook.

- S. Leatherhead, one pair in a rookery of 14 pairs built on the weather-vane of the Blind School chapel, an unusual site (J.E.S.D.).

#### 7. Magpie.

- K. Increasing in Orpington district (A.H.W., M.W.). Green Street Green, flock of 40/50 within about an acre on Apr. 13 (W.I.B.). West Longfield, c.70 in one field on Dec. 7 (J.S.S.B.).
- S. Reigate, flock of 60/70 on Feb. 23 (J.E.S.D.).

**10/11. Jay.**

S. Tadworth, six times between Sept. 25 and Oct. 18, birds moving purposefully east, flying high and not calling; the largest parties were 17 on Sept. 25 and 9 on Oct. 15. A similar movement has been seen in previous autumns (H.B., c.f. *B.B.*, 41, p. 180).

**17. Golden Oriole.**

M. Mill Hill, a male calling in tree-tops in the school grounds on Aug. 17 was seen and the plumage described (E.H.W.).

**18. Hawfinch.**

E. Epping Forest, one adult with a young bird seen on June 7 (E.O.H.). Recorded in the breeding season from Hainault Forest and South Weald.

M. Mill Hill, a party of juveniles on June 9 (E.H.W.). In the inner suburbs single birds were noted at Chiswick House on Mar. 9 (E.M.N.) and Golders Green on Mar. 2 (S.C.); Hampstead, a pair and one juvenile, Aug. 5/7 (K.D.M.).

K. Nested at Bickley (F.J.H.), Elmstead Woods (J.F.B.) and Southfleet (J.S.S.B.).

S. Records generally are very numerous but there are none from a triangular area bounded roughly by Reigate, Purley, and Godstone. The species extends well into the inner suburbs: nested again on Wimbledon Common (B.A.R.) and a male seen feeding a fledgling on Tooting Common, June 2 (C.J.H.); one-two here and at Tooting Graveney from Aug. 31 to Sept. 5 (H.G.A.); Kew Gardens, max. 6 on Apr. 10 (J.A.W.); Mitcham Common, six on Mar. 8 (C.B.A.).

**19. Greenfinch.**

S. Walton Heath, a flock frequenting a group of cornstacks, Feb. 13-18, reached a maximum of c.500 (H.B.). Richmond Park, c.150 roosting in Pond Plantation on Nov. 22 (R.W.Hn.).

**21. Siskin.**

E. Aveley, one on Feb. 23 (M.J.A.). Walthamstow Res., six on Feb. 8 (H.W.R.).

H. Rickmansworth, c.20 near the canal on Nov. 30 (T.B.); Stocker's Lake, c.14 on Nov. 30 and two on Dec. 14 (J.A.B., W.G.T.).

M. Bushy Park, noted from Jan.-Mar., max. 40/50 in Mar. (E.W.P., R.M.). Enfield, 16/20 on alders in Whitewebbs Park on Dec. 28 (L.J.J.). Harefield Moor, 30/40 on Mar. 9 (R.H.M.R., C.A.W.). Mill Hill, one on Jan. 24 (E.H.W.). Ruislip, c.20 on Feb. 2 (C.A.W.) and four on Apr. 7 (J.E.H.M.). Stanmore, 35/40 on Mar. 15 and Mar. 22; of eight with Goldfinches and Greenfinches on alders on Apr. 12 four were males, singing; one on Nov. 23 and c.25 on Dec. 7

(J.A.B., W.G.T.). Uxbridge, one on Jan. 26 and 15/20 on Mar. 2 (T.B., R.H.M.R.).

- K. Greenwich Park, a male in an elm on Jan. 15. Knockholt, two males and a female in a hedge on Mar. 2 (J.F.B., D.F.O.).
- S. Godstone, 30/35 with Redpolls and Goldfinches on Jan. 5 (H.F.G.). Oxshott, five in pines on Apr. 10 (K.P.K.). Reigate Heath, a flock of c.70 on Feb. 7 (H.B.). Richmond, seven flying up Thames, Surrey side, on Apr. 13 (J.A.B.).

#### 25. Lesser Redpoll.

- M. Stanmore-Harrow Weald area, present in the breeding season and flocks up to c.150 seen in Feb. and Mar. on Stanmore Common; up to six in Nov. and Dec. (J.A.B., E.H.W.). Uxbridge, up to c.20 Jan.-Mar. and Oct.-Nov. (T.B., R.H.M.R., C.A.W.). Hampstead Heath, seven on Apr. 20 (V.R.G.).
- K. Up to c.30 reported in Mar. and Apr. from the following open spaces in the suburban area: Greenwich Park, Shooters Hill, Bostall Woods (near Woolwich), Kelsey Park and Sundridge Park (J.F.B., D.F.O.). Hayes Common, c.60 on Apr. 8; Danson Park, c.50 on Dec. 27 (D.F.O.).
- S. Nested at South Croydon (F.M.F.) and present in the breeding season at Limsfield and Merton Park; Wandsworth Common, one singing in birches on July 15 (H.G.A.). Dulwich Wood, two on Apr. 16 (P.J.B.); Wimbledon Common, flocks of up to c.100 in Mar. and Apr. (R.W.Hn., D.C.P., B.A.R.).

#### 42. Brambling.

- E. Wennington, one on Mar. 8 (M.J.A.).
- H. Barnet Gate, near Arkley, one on Feb. 16 (P.E.L.S.).
- K. Single birds noted at Orpington and West Wickham in Feb., and Dartford Heath and Southfleet in Oct.
- S. Reported from five North Downs localities, notably a flock of up to 86 with other finches round cornstacks on Walton Heath during most of Feb. (H.B. *et al.*). Beddington S.F., a hen on Mar. 6 (A.C.G.P.); Richmond Park, eight on Feb. 16 (T.C.).

#### 43. Corn-Bunting.

- B. Wraysbury, two singing on May 26 (D.J.M., J.O.O.).
- E. For status in South Essex see *B.B.*, 40, p. 146. Recorded during the breeding season from Aveley, Dagenham, Purfleet, and Upminster.
- M. Heathrow and Perry Oaks S.F., noted from May to Sept.; Staines Moor, one on May 13 and seven on Dec. 20 (W.G.T. *et al.*).
- K. Stone Marshes, one singing on May 6 (W.I.B.); Erith Marshes, two singing on July 25 (J.F.B.).

**49. Cirl Bunting.**

- H. Colney Street, a male at Old Parkbury G.P. on Jan. 26 (W.D.M.).
- S. Betchworth, one pair nested just inside the Area and another just outside it; Buckland, a singing male on June 18 was probably not of the Betchworth pairs (C.B.A.). Walton Heath, a cock feeding by strawstacks on Jan. 26 (P.W.E.C.).

**50. Ortolan Bunting.**

- S. Nore Hill dew-pond (between Chelsham and Woldingham), one on Aug. 23 (H.E.P., see also *B.B.*, 41, p. 20). This is the first record for the London Area.

**62. Tree-Sparrow.**

- E. Observed in the breeding season at Upminster and Waltham Abbey.
- H. Recorded during the breeding season from Hamper Mill; young seen being fed at Cheshunt on Aug. 11 (S.A., W.A.W.).
- M. Nested at Edgware (F.C.B.), Hanworth (E.W.P.), and Stanmore (J.A.B.); present in the breeding season at East Bedford and Hampton. Brent Res., c.50 on Jan. 12 (J.A.B.); Staines Moor, 40/50 on Apr. 13 (C.A.W.) and up to four in May and July.
- K. Greenwich Park, one pair in the breeding season (J.F.B.).
- S. Beddington S.F., at least one pair bred and others present in the breeding season (C.B.A.).

**68. Crested Lark.**

- S. Thames-side between Hammersmith Bridge and Chiswick Eyot, two seen on the mud for about ten minutes at close range on Mar. 8; the conspicuous crests and flesh-coloured legs were clearly seen and the outer tail feathers were not white (M.C., see also *B.B.*, 41, p. 345). This is the first record for the London Area and the eleventh authenticated for the British Isles.

**69. Wood-Lark.**

- E. Epping Forest, one pair probably bred at Warren Hill where a bird was singing between June 19 and 28 (S.A. *et al.*) and an empty nest found on June 28 (D.W.G., W.A.W.); one bird was seen on July 18 (W.A.W.) and on July 27 one "mobbed" H.W.R. as he approached the area where the nest had been found; High Beach, one singing on Oct. 9 (W.A.W.). This is only the second season in which Wood-Larks have been reported from Epping Forest since 1905 (see *L.B.R.*, 1946, p. 7). Hainault Forest, one pair bred (as in 1946); parents seen feeding almost fully-fledged young on May 30 (A.R.M.B., see also *B.B.*, 40, p. 275).



- M. Stanmore, two singing males Mar.-May and one continued singing until June 22 (T.B., F.C.B., W.D.M.). On May 2 the birds were anxious at the observer's approach (E.H.W.) and on June 21 J.A.B. saw a pair carrying food, but neither on this nor subsequent visits was a nest or brood found. This is the second record for Middlesex since 1938.
- S. Dulwich, one on the golf-course on Apr. 15 (P.J.B.). Richmond Park, one pair bred (R.W.Hn.); Ham Common, one seen on Apr. 5 (F.R.M.); Wimbledon Common, two pairs bred (E. & P.S., R.H.S.). In two places at Oxshott behaviour suggested breeding though no nest was found (J.H.L.). Comparatively few records received from the North Downs, where the species was absent from several favoured haunts; a flock of ten was seen at Headley on July 27 (F.M.F.).

#### 75. Tree-Pipit.

- M. Hampstead Heath, a singing male in May and June in Kenwood Fields (V.R.G. *et al.*; *c.f.* L.B.R., 1946, p. 8).

#### 81. Rock-Pipit.

- K. Swanscombe Marshes, two on Nov. 16 (J.F.B., D.F.O.).  
S. Barn Elms Res., one on Oct. 5 (G.C.L.).

#### [84. Blue-headed Wagtail.

- M. No typical cocks were seen but on May 10 at the Brent Res. a hen with a broad white eyestripe and white chin resembled this form (T.B.). At Staines New Res. on July 13 R.daC. and E.G.P. reported a bird having a whitish-bluish head without an eyestripe; of about ten *flava* sp. on Staines Moor on July 8 four had upper parts darkish-grey, almost white underparts, white eyestripes and chins; two carried food and another was in company of a male *flavissima* (W.G.T.).
- S. A hen with a white superciliary streak and chin seen consorting with several *flavissima* at Barn Elms Res. on May 1 was possibly *M. f. flava* (T.B.).]

#### 88. Yellow Wagtail.

- B. Observed in the breeding season at Colnbrook.
- E. Barking, three pairs bred at Mayesbrook Park G.P. (H.E.A.). Observed during the breeding season at Chingford and Waltham Abbey. Walthamstow Res., two on Oct. 16, a late date (S.A., W.A.W.).
- M. Nested at Hampton (four pairs, E.W.P.), in the Hendon-Mill Hill area (three pairs, E.H.W.) and at the Brent Res. two pairs, J.R.C.); Chiswick Park, a pair and four young on July 8 (E.H.W.); Gunnersbury Park, two from May to July (J.R.C.). In the London Docks area a pair was present during June on a bombed site in Silvertown (T.H.A.).

- K. Blackheath, certainly two and perhaps three pairs bred (J.F.B.); Greenwich Park, one pair bred successfully (J.F.B., F.J.H.); Woolwich, a pair reared two broods on the Common (J.M.C.).
- S. Nested at Beddington S.F. (C.B.A.) and Ham G.P. (F.R.M.). Barn Elms Res., a cock on Mar. 29, an early date (D.J.M., J.O.O.); again abundant on both passages and several pairs bred successfully (G.C.L., A.G.G.T., *et al.*); flock of 30/40 roosted in reeds of the "pits," Sept. 17-19 (A.G.G.T.). Walton S.F., c.70 roosting in reeds, Sept. 14 (P.A.D.H.).

### 89. Grey Wagtail.

- M. Bushy Park, a pair in Apr., May and June may have bred as a juvenile was seen on July 1 and 11 (E.W.P.).
- K. One pair bred in or near Greenwich Park; seen feeding fledglings near the Superintendent's Lodge in late June (J.F.B., F.J.H., D.F.O.).
- S. Epsom S.F., one pair reared five young in nest built about five feet up in stack of old bricks (H.B., L.I.C., A.C.G.P.). Carshalton, one by the Wandle on June 25 (C.B.A.); Godstone, two on July 12 and Aug. 9 (K.R.C., H.F.G.). No other summer records this year.

### 90. Pied Wagtail.

- E. Barking, 40/50 used reed-beds at Mayesbrook Park G.P. as a roost from Nov. 2 onwards (H.E.A.).
- S. Balham, 50/100 congregating in January on the roof of the Grammar School to roost (G.H.U.); Beddington S.F. pond, c.150 settling to roost in dense reed-mace stems on Mar. 22 (C.B.A.).

### 91. White Wagtail.

- M. Stanmore, one on Apr. 20 (J.A.B.).
- S. Mortlake, a male on Mar. 16 (R.H.M.R., T.B.); Barn Elms Res., one on May 1 (C.H.). Beddington S.F., one adult on Sept. 9 (H.B.), one (probably male) on Sept. 12, three males on Sept. 14, one female or immature on Sept. 19 (A.C.G.P.).

### 108. Willow-Tit.

- B. Two were seen near Denham on Jan. 29 (B.A.R.).
- E. Epping Forest, pair building a nest on Apr. 14 (S.A., W.A.W.); one near Connaught Water on Apr. 15 (H.W.R., W.A.W.); one at High Beach on Dec. 28 (K.D.G.M.).
- H. Colney Heath, one on Mar. 2 (W.D.M.). Watford S.F., two on Dec. 24 (J.A.B.).
- M. Stanmore Common, one singing on May 9 (E.H.W.) and up to six, Sept.-Dec. (J.A.B., W.G.T.). Recorded in winter from Ickenham and Ruislip (T.B., C.A.W.).

- S. Arbrook Common, one on Apr. 10 (K.P.K.). Bookham Common, one on Jan. 12 (G.B.). Mickleham, two adults on Sept. 7 (R.S.A.). Oxshott, one on Feb. 16 (P.W.E.C.). Wimbledon Common, one on July 20, Aug. 4 and Aug. 9 (C.D.).

#### 114. Great Grey Shrike.

- S. Ashtead Common, one on Feb. 6 (A.C.G.P.). Barnes Common, one on Mar. 17; Mitcham Common, one on Mar. 15 (L.I.C.). Walton Heath, one on Jan. 19, Mar. 8, and Mar. 16 (H.B., P.A.D.H., R.C.H.); one on Dec. 21 (J.S.W.).

#### 119. Red-backed Shrike.

- E. Bred as usual in Epping Forest (C.E.B. *et al.*).  
 H. Bred near Elstree Res. and at Boreham Wood (E.H.W.). Observed during the breeding season at Totteridge (Mill Hill School N.H.S.).  
 M. Nested at Eastcote (T.L.B.), Edgware and Mill Hill (P.F.L.S.), Stanmore (J.A.B., W.D.M.), Northwood and Staines (C.A.W.).  
 K. Nested on Erith Marshes (J.F.B.) and probably at Barnehurst (W.I.B.) and Sundridge Park (J.F.B., D.F.O.).  
 S. Breeding records from Banstead Downs (F.D.L.). Esher (Littleworth Common, W.D.S.), Mitcham Common (W.W.T.), Putney Vale (B.A.R.), Tadworth, Walton Heath and Warlingham (H.B., H.F.G.).

#### 120. Waxwing.

- B. Iver, one on Jan. 11, four on Feb. 1, one on Feb. 9 (A.V.T.).  
 E. Chingford, one on Jan. 25 (E.A.R.). Larkwood, one on Mar. 28 (M.R.P.). Southwood, four in early March (M.G.). Upminster, one found dead on Feb. 17 (M.J.A.).  
 M. Reported from Edgware, Finchley, Golder's Green, Gunnersbury Park, Hampstead, Harrow, Mill Hill, Palmer's Green, Perivale, Ruislip, Staines, Totteridge, Wealdstone and Wembley; in parties up to 20, often in roads and small gardens in built-up areas, Jan. 2-Mar. 20. At Harlington a flock of up to 30 was present during most of Jan. and four remained until Feb. 4.  
 K. Bexleyheath, six on Jan. 20 (F.J.E.). Bromley, two for 11 days in Jan. (F.J.H.). Kidbrooke, one found dead in Mar. (D.F.O.). West Wickham, six on Feb. 8 and four on Feb. 10 (T.R.E.).  
 S. Herne Hill, 24 on Mar. 29 (P.A.D.H., R.C.H.); Kew Gardens, one on Mar 23 (S.C.); up to 15 recorded from the suburbs at Merton Park, Mitcham, New Malden, South Norwood and Wallington, Jan. 20-Apr. 1; Redhill, 5/6 on Mar. 1. (A flock of up to 50 at Effingham was just outside the Society's Area. See also *B.B.*, 41, pp. 2-9 and 34-40)

**123. Pied Flycatcher.**

- M. Plumage details have been received of a male seen on West Heath, Hampstead, in the last week of April (L.C.S.).  
 K. Beckenham, a male in observer's garden on Apr. 26 (C.N.W.).  
 S. Littleworth Common, Esher, a pair watched for half an hour feeding between ground and birches, Apr. 22 (W.D.S.).

**128. Firecrest.**

- E. Epping Forest, one at Connaught Water on Jan. 6 (A.C.W., see also *B.B.*, 41, p. 60).  
 K. One in brambles in a small wood near Sidcup on Dec. 28 was well seen and the plumage described (D.F.O.).

**135. Wood-Warbler.**

- M. Hampstead Heath, one from May 23 to June 10 (H.M.R.K.).  
 K. Elmers End S.F., 2/3 on Apr. 26 (C.F.T.). Shooters Hill, a pair on May 9 (J.F.B.).  
 S. Nested near Chelsham (H.E.P.) and at Oxshott Woods was described as being more common than Chiffchaff (J.H.L.). Late date, one at Headley on Oct. 5 (F.M.F.).

**145. Grasshopper Warbler.**

- M. Harefield, one on June 29 (C.A.W.). Staines Moor, one on May 16 (J.S.W.).  
 S. Chipstead, one reeling on Apr. 26/27 did not stay (L.I.C., B.W.). Bookham Common, a pair seen with what appeared to be fledglings, June 29 (P.W.E.C.); two pairs reported by several observers, Apr. 25-Aug. 10; persistent song was heard by P.W.E.C. on Aug. 10, a late date.

**149. Reed-Warbler.**

- E. Barking, 13 pairs bred at Mayesbrook Park G.P.; 19 nests were found and of the 66 eggs 72.7% hatched; the fledging success was 72.9% of the eggs hatched, or 53% of the eggs laid (H.E.A.).  
 M. Nested at Poyle G.P. (four pairs, G.M.H., W.G.T.) and Staines Moor (D.J.M., C.A.W.). Brentford, three singing in Syon House Marsh on June 17 (C.D.).  
 S. Strong circumstantial evidence of breeding at Barn Elms Res. (two pairs) and Beddington S.F. (one pair). Epsom S.F., present during the breeding season and one on Sept. 19; Tadworth, one passing bird sang in a garden nearly all day on May 17 (H.B.).

**173. Fieldfare.**

- E. Rainham, a flock estimated at c.2000 on Dec. 26 (M.J.A.).  
 S. Beddington S.F., max. c.2500 estimated on Feb. 6 (A.C.G.P.); Mickleham, 700/800 in beeches during December (J.E.S.D.). Mitcham Common, c.200 roosting in hawthorns on Mar. 8 had gone by Mar. 18 (C.B.A.).

**178. Redwing.**

S. Beddington S.F., max. c.2000 estimated on Feb. 8 (A.C.G.P.).  
Late dates: Apr. 13, one at New Malden (W.D.S.); Apr. 19,  
one at Godstone (H.F.G.).

**182. Ring-Ouzel.**

M. Stanmore, a male calling and singing on Apr. 12 was well  
seen and plumage details noted (J.A.B.).  
K. Elmers End S.F., a male seen at 15 yards and the "chack"  
note heard on Mar. 23 (R.R.C.).

**186/7. Wheatear.**

Passage through the Area lasted from Mar. 16 to May 8 in the  
spring, and from July 8 to Sept. 24 in the autumn.

M. Details of field characters have been received of examples  
probably referable to the Greenland form: one at the Brent  
Res. on May 6 flew to the topmost twig of a nearby 50' tree  
and perched there (T.B., R.H.M.R.); two in company with a  
typical *oenanthe* finally perched on trees at about 40', Hamp-  
stead Heath, Apr. 26 (V.R.G.); one at Stanmore on Sept. 6  
perched on tops of 35' and 25' trees for long periods (J.A.B.).  
K. Blackheath, seen on both migrations but did not breed in the  
1946 site—ground rendered unsuitable (J.F.B.). Woolwich,  
two adults and three immatures on the Common, June 15  
(J.M.C.).

**197. Whinchat.**

E. Barking, one pair nested at Mayesbrook Park G.P. but the  
eggs were broken (H.E.A.). Observed during the breeding  
season at Chingford, Hornchurch Marshes, Walthamstow  
Res. and Wennington.  
H. Rowley Green, one adult with four young on Sept. 14  
(P.E.L.S.). St Albans, family party of c.5 on Aug. 25  
(S.A.). Recorded during the breeding season from Cheshunt.  
M. Nested at Hendon (E.H.W.), Mill Hill (two pairs, E.H.W.),  
Perry Oaks S.F. (two pairs, C.H.) and Staines Moor (three  
pairs, B.A.R., J.S.W. *et al.*).  
K. Erith Marshes, a hen repeatedly seen carrying food on July  
25 (J.F.B.). Stone Marshes, a pair with three fledglings on  
June 21 (C.B.A.). Woolwich, one male (apparently un-  
mated) singing about the Common, May 16-31 (J.M.C.).  
S. No breeding records; Walton Heath, a singing male stayed  
from May 18 to June 8 (H.B., L.I.C., A.C.G.P.).

**198. Stonechat.**

With the exception of a pair which reared five young on  
Walton Heath, Surrey (L.I.C., A.C.G.P.), no Stonechats were  
recorded in the London Area after Apr. 7. (At least five  
pairs nested in 1946—see *L.B.R.*, 1946, p. 13).

**201. Redstart.**

- E. Epping Forest, nested as usual (S.A., C.E.L.).
- M. Nested in Bushy Park (at least three pairs, E.W.P.) and on Stanmore Common (two pairs, J.A.B., E.H.W.).
- K. Petts Wood Common, a male singing on May 7 (J.S.W.).
- S. Nested as usual in Richmond Park (A.E.H.) and probably at Shirley (R.T.P.).

**202. Black Redstart.**

See p. 32 for 1947 breeding season records.

- E. Walthamstow Res., a female on Feb. 10 (K.D.G.M.).
- M. Mill Hill, a male at a timber yard on Nov. 13 and 14 (E.H.W.).
- S. Beddington S.F., one male on several dates from January 5 to Feb. 8 (G.B., L.I.C., A.C.G.P., A.G.G.T.). Putney Vale, a female on allotments and waste ground on Mar. 21 (R.W.Hn.).

**222. House-Martin.**

- E. House-Martins roosted with Sand-Martins in reed beds at Mayesbrook Park G.P., Barking, from Aug. 25 onwards. The total flock numbered 500/600 birds, increasing to a maximum of over 1000 on Aug. 30. Numbers began to decrease from Sept. 6 onwards and only odd birds were seen after Sept. 14 (H.E.A.). *The Handbook of British Birds* (Vol. 11, p. 236) states: "does not ordinarily, if ever, roost in reed- or osier-beds like Swallow and Sand-Martin."
- M. A passage over the Staines New Res. was noted on May 24, the birds flying N.E. into the wind at the rate of c.200 an hour; on May 27 odd birds were still heading in the same direction, again into the wind (R.J.R.).

**225. Swift.**

- M. Staines New Res., a fair passage N.E. at c.250 an hour with House-Martins on May 24 (wind N.E., moderate); small numbers again flying N.E. at the rate of 75/100 an hour on May 27 (wind N.E., light). A return passage on a smaller scale was noted on Aug. 7 and Aug. 27, the birds flying S. or S.W. (R.J.R.).

**227. Nightjar.**

- E. A pair nested in Epping Forest but the two eggs disappeared during June (C.E.B.).
- H. North Mimms, one heard on May 24 (P.E.L.S.).
- K. Darenth Wood, nest with two chicks on July 4 (D.F.O.). West Wickham, a male seen in June (T.R.E.).
- S. Addington, a male on June 9 (T.R.E.). Oxshott, heard in May but not subsequently (J.H.L.). Headley, one seen at close range flying in daylight on June 29 and heard to clap

wings (F.M.F.); *c.f.* David Lack in *The London Naturalist*, 1930, p. 48).

**232. Hoopoe.**

M. Queen Mary Res., one, clearly identified, feeding on the grassy bank on Mar. 29 flew to nearby trees (D.J.M.).

**239. Wryneck.**

H. North Mimms, one heard on Apr. 27 (P.E.L.S.) and on May 11 (W.D.M.).

M. Mill Hill, one on Apr. 18; South Mimms, one on May 19 (E.H.W.).

S. Chipstead, nest with young c.20' up in elm on July 2 (L.I.C.). Fetcham, a pair nested successfully in a garden nest-box (D.B., W.G.T.). Leatherhead, a pair seen and heard almost daily from mid-May to the end of June and breeding suspected (J.E.S.D.). Tadworth, one pair in each of the two 1946 localities (H.B.). A number of birds were reported calling in May in various places but did not stay.

**249. Little Owl.**

S. Inner suburbs, a pair probably bred in Dulwich Wood (P.J.B.).

**250. Long-eared Owl.**

M. Perry Oaks S.F., one flushed from a bed of osiers and small bushes on Nov. 16 was later seen perched three feet from the ground in a small tree and a good view obtained (C.A.W.). This is the first record for Middlesex since 1871.

**251. Short-eared Owl.**

M. Brent Res., one hunting over the open ground to the north of the reservoir on Mar. 15 (C.F.T.).

S. Beddington S.F. and Mitcham Common, one to four recorded between Jan. 2 and Mar. 23; perching up to 50' in trees often noted (G.B., A.C.G.P. *et al.*; *c.f.* *L.B.R.*, 1946, p. 16).

**254. Barn-Owl.**

S. Thorpe, one pair bred in a hole high up in an elm, an old site (D.G., W.G.T.).

**259. Peregrine Falcon.**

M. Staines New Res., one seen at intervals for four hours on Aug. 24 stooped at Lapwings, a Stock Dove and a Heron (C.A.W.); one on Nov. 23 was seen chasing pipits (J.S.W.).

**261. Hobby.**

M. Staines Res., one on May 2 approached from the N.E. (W.G.T.); Staines Moor, two on May 10 chased a party of finches and later started to circle, gaining height and departing west (C.A.W.); at East Bedfont, two miles to the east,

one flew low across the road on May 22 (W.G.T.); two were flying round the bed of Staines New Res. on June 1, occasionally alighting (R.daC., E.G.P.), and one was seen there on June 21 (P.A.D.H.); one alighted on the gravel at the north end of the reservoir on Nov. 9 and later flew off east (R.daC.).

- K. In the North Kent locality referred to in the *L.B.R.*, 1946, p. 16, four were seen on May 5 (J.F.B.) and two pairs were watched all the afternoon on May 11 (D.F.O.). Bickley, one twice flew over gardens on June 18 (F.J.H.).

**262. Merlin.**

- S. Tadworth, one was seen over his garden in late Feb. by H.B., who is an experienced observer familiar with the species.

**263. Kestrel.**

One ringed as young on July 13, 1947, at Harrow, Middx., was recovered thirteen days later twenty-three miles S.E. at St Paul's Cray, Kent (T.L.B.).

- S. Barn Elms Res., a female eating a dead gull on the ice, Feb. 8 (R.W.Hu., see also *B.B.*, 41, p. 21). Dulwich, on Mar. 22, within twenty minutes during mid-morning, 10/20 flew south over the College at a height of 100 to 150 feet; in pairs or singly but usually within sight of the next ahead (P.J.B.).

**268/9. Buzzard** (species not determined).

- H. Hamper Mill S.F., Watford, one in flight on Dec. 24 (J.A.B.).  
M. Hampstead Heath, two together on Nov. 19 gained height and departed S./S.W. (V.R.G.).

**273. Hen-Harrier.**

- M. Perry Oaks S.F., a female or immature showing a broad white rump-patch seen on Jan. 3, 10 and 26 ranged eastwards towards Poyle and southwards to the edge of Stanwell village (H.A.B., E.O.H.).  
S. Banstead Heath, a female or immature was seen on Dec. 6 near Castle House (L.R.E.).

**289. Common Heron.**

- E. Little Parndon, five occupied nests (W.A.W.). Walthamstow Res., 52 occupied nests, a decrease of 10 on 1946 (W.A.W.). Wanstead Park, four occupied nests, a decrease of five on 1946 (W.H.F.).  
M. Kempton Park, 52 occupied nests, as in 1946 (E.W.P.).  
S. Godstone, one nest in alder by "Clayton" or "Town" pond on Mar. 16—probably a new site (H.B., L.I.C.). Richmond Park, ten pairs nested, as against 11 pairs in 1946 (C.L.C.). Gatton Park, two pairs nested at the smaller lake (H.B.).



The total for the London Area was thus 126 breeding pairs; the fall from 142 pairs in 1946 is presumably due to the exceptionally severe weather early in the year.

On May 25, 1946, and twice on Jan. 2, 1947, H.A.B. saw a Heron settle deliberately on the water at Queen Mary Res. It floated high in the water and took off easily. At Walthamstow Res. on Sept. 30 W.A.W. saw an immature twice walking into deep water and then swimming. Previous instances of Herons swimming have been given in *B.B.*, 38, pp. 136, 216-7, and there are further records of plunging.

**297. Bittern.**

M. Twickenham, one in the grounds of St Mary's College, Mar. 20-22 (K.E.L.S.).

K. Ruxley G.P., one put up from a pool on Mar. 2 (F.J.H., A.H.W., M.W.).

S. Beddington Corner, one flushed from reeds near the Wandle and subsequently seen standing, Feb. 1 (T.R.E., C.F.T.).

Carshalton, one found by Mrs Dando in a garden on Mar. 18 was sent to the Zoo and identified but was in poor condition and lived only to May 20 (The Supt., Zoological Gdns.).

**301. Bewick's Swan.**

M. Brent Res., two adults on Dec. 20 left during the afternoon (T.B.). This is the fifth occurrence in the London Area since 1924.

**303/7. Grey Geese (species not determined).**

K. Southfleet, three over gardens on Dec. 7 (J.S.S.B.).

T. Chiswick Eyot, two flying over on Feb. 19 (M.C.).

**303. Grey Lag-Goose.**

E. Walthamstow Res., two on Feb. 12 (E.O.H., see also *B.B.*, 41, p. 87). This is the first record for the London Area since 1919, when a single bird was seen at Snaresbrook, Essex.

**304. White-fronted Goose.**

M. Staines Res., an immature on Nov. 23 (T.B., J.S.C.).

K./S. Seventeen, including several immatures, flying west over the county boundary near West Wickham on Jan. 7 were low enough for plumage details to be seen (T.R.E.).

**315. Sheld-Duck.**

H. Colney Street, one at Old Parkbury G.P. on Mar. 2 (E.R.P.).  
Hamper Mill, one on Feb. 22 (F.C.B., W.D.M.).

M. Brent Res., one flying N.W. on Mar. 1 (J.A.B.) and one on May 9 (T.B.).

T. Between Feb. 19 and Mar. 29 many observers noted either one or two at Barn Elms Res. or on the river from Hammer-smith Bridge to Chiswick Eyot.

**318. Gadwall.**

- E. Walthamstow Res., one drake with Mallard on Mar. 2 (E.O.H.).
- M. Staines Res., two drakes on Feb. 22 (F.M.F.).
- S. Beddington S.F. pond, of six on July 10 one was an immature and three others possibly were (C.B.A.); a pair on Sept. 24 (C.J.H.).
- T. Barn Elms Res., a nest with seven eggs on June 29 (A.G.G.T.) was subsequently robbed, but a pair seen nesting on July 17 reared six young (G.C.L.). Recorded in every month at Barn Elms and Lonsdale Rd. Res. and on the river from Putney to Barnes; maxima 23 on the river on Mar. 1 (J.S.C., J.A.W.) and 20 at Barn Elms on Nov. 2 (F.J.L.M.).

**322. Garganey.**

- E. Rainham, a drake and a duck at Berwick Pond on Apr. 13 and a drake there on May 4 (M.J.A.).
- M. Poyle G.P., a pair on May 17 and a duck flushed from the same spot on June 1 (R.daC., C.H., E.G.P.). Staines Res., five (one drake) on July 20 (J.R.C.); Brent Res., a pair in flight on Aug. 9 (S.C.).
- T. Barn Elms Res., ten on Mar. 18 (S.A.).

**323. Wigeon.**

- E. Up to four reported from King George Res. and Walthamstow Res. in Feb. and on flooded fields at Rainham in March. Dagenham G.P., a duck on Apr. 27 (M.J.A.). Epping Forest, a drake on Connaught Water on Dec. 5 and subsequently (K.D.G.M. *et al.*).
- H. Hamper Mill, a drake on Mar. 16 (J.A.B.). Rickmansworth, a drake on a gravel pit near Stocker's Lake on Jan. 19 (T.B.). Elstree Res., four on Nov. 8 (E.H.W.) and three on Dec. 21 and 25 (J.A.B.).
- M. Staines Res., recorded in all months except July; the flock of c. 200 reported in December 1946 (*L.B.R.*, 1946, p. 19) rose to c. 300 on Jan. 2 (F.M.F.); a single drake was present on May 12 and June 10 (J.A.B., B.A.R.) and c. 100 of both sexes on Nov. 8 (C.A.W.). Noted in winter on Brent and Queen Mary Res., and up to three at Perry Oaks S.F.
- K. Ruxley G.P., 20/30 on Feb. 23 (F.J.H.). Danson Park Lake, a drake on Dec. 24 and 27 (D.F.O.).
- S. Beddington Corner, two drakes and two ducks on Feb. 1 (T.R.E., C.F.T.). Walton Res., present Jan.-Mar., max. 75 on Feb. 2 (P.W.E.C.).
- T. Hammersmith to Kew, present Jan.-Mar., maxima 30 on Feb. 23 (F.M.F.) and 80 on Feb. 26 (H.M.R.K.). Barn Elms and Lonsdale Rd. Res., up to ten Jan.-Feb. and Nov.-Dec. Fulham, a drake on Dec. 7 (B.A.R.).

**325. Pintail.**

- M. Brent Res., two drakes and a duck on Jan. 5 and 12 (W.G.T., *et al.*). Staines Res., two drakes on Jan. 23 (R.H.M.R.) and one from Sept. 4 to Dec. 12 (T.B., H.M.R.K.). Stain Hill Res., Hampton, a drake and a duck on Nov. 30 (E.W.P.).
- S. Walton Res., four on Mar. 1, ten on Mar. 2, ten drakes and sixteen ducks on Mar. 8 and 9 (P.W.E.C. *et al.*).
- T. Resorted to the river between Putney and Richmond from Feb. 1 to Mar. 15, commonly in parties of six or more; max. 15 on Mar. 9 (J.S.C., B.A.R. *et al.*).

**326. Shoveler.**

- H. Elstree Res., a drake on Dec. 20 (E.H.W.) and two on Dec. 21 and 25 (J.A.B.). Hamper Mill, a drake on Mar. 16 (J.A.B.). Radlett, a drake on the River Colne on Mar. 16 (P.E.L.S.).
- M. Perry Oaks S.F., two pairs in April and May but no evidence of nesting (C.A.W. *et al.*). Staines Res., recorded throughout the year, max. c. 100 on Jan. 2 (F.M.F.) and 80/100 from Sept. 20-Oct. 18 (B.A.R., C.A.W.).
- S. Island Barn Res., a drake and a duck on Jan. 4 (P.W.E.C.). Molesey G.P., a duck on June 26 (B.A.R.). Walton Res., a drake and a duck on Jan. 4, two drakes and a duck on Mar. 9, 16 on Nov. 1 (P.W.E.C., P.A.D.H., D.C.P.). Walton S.F., two on Aug. 8 (P.A.D.H.).
- T. Barn Elms and Lonsdale Rd. Res. and Thames near Chiswick Eyot, a drake from Feb. 2-23 and two on Feb. 26 (J.S.C. *et al.*). Barn Elms Res., one on Oct. 19 (G.C.L.).

**328. Common Pochard.**

- H. Colney Street, a duck with six young at Old Parkbury G.P. on July 30 (F.C.B., *c.f.* L.B.R., 1946, p. 20).
- M. St James's Park, an adult female ringed by E.O.H. on Feb. 22, 1942, was recovered dead where ringed on Dec. 16, 1947; one ringed on Dec. 12, 1945, was recovered where ringed on Mar. 15, 1947 (T.L.B.).
- K. A drake on a gravel pit in the Dartford district on June 21 (C.B.A.).
- S. Walton Res., a flock of 1500/2000 was present all through Feb. and early March, but none remained on Mar. 23 (P.W.E.C., W.J.L.S. *et al.*).
- T. Barn Elms Res., 600/1000 during Jan. and early Feb. until the reservoirs froze. Flocks resorted to the Thames during the cold weather, the largest number being c. 1000 at Wandsworth on Feb. 28 (J.S.C., R.W.Hn., E.G.P. *et al.*).

**[329. Ferruginous Duck.**

- T. Barn Elms Res., an adult drake on Jan. 12 and 29 (E.G.P.). The description given leaves no doubt that the bird was cor-

rectly identified, but it falls under the usual suspicion of being an escape. It is of interest that the Duke of Bedford, in a letter to the *Manchester Guardian* on May 3, 1947, wrote: "The war has had a devastating effect on collections of waterfowl. . . . For the next few years, at any rate, I think it will be fairly safe to assume that any full-winged duck, even if rare and unusual, is not one that has escaped from captivity."]

### 330. Tufted Duck.

- E. Bred at Walthamstow Res.; an adult with six young seen on July 15, and on July 24 nine adults with a total of 45 young—families ranging from 1 to 11 (W.A.W.).
- H. Colney Street, a pair with five young at Old Parkbury G.P. on Aug. 18 and subsequently (E.H.W.).
- M. Two further recoveries of birds ringed in St James's Park have been notified (*B.B.*, 40, p. 364):
- Ringed 24.9.46, recovered Pitsea, Essex (30 miles E.) on 13.12.46.
- Ringed 24.10.46, recovered Rainham, Kent (35 miles E.S.E.) on 13.12.46.

Previous recoveries of birds ringed in St James's Park have been published in the *L.B.R.* as follows: 1936 p. 34, 1943 p. 12, 1944 p. 22, 1945 p. 14, 1946 p. 20.

- S. Beddington S.F. pond, one pair bred (O.B.A., A.G.G.T., C.F.T.). Battersea Park, a pair on June 13 (J.R.C.). Kew Gardens, a duck and seven immatures on July 8 (R.S.A.). Walton G.P., a drake, a duck and an immature on June 9 (G.B.). Walton Res., 1000/3000 (estimated) present during the cold weather of Feb. and early March (P.W.E.C., H.F.G. *et al.*).
- T. Barn Elms Res., numbers rose to a maximum of 900/1000 between Jan. 19-Feb. 15; flocks of up to 200/300 were seen on the river from Chelsea to Kew in Feb. and March (J.S.C., E.G.P. *et al.*). Lonsdale Rd. Res., over 500 on Dec. 30 (D.C.P.).

### 331. Scaup-Duck.

- E. Walthamstow Res., three drakes and a duck on Feb. 22 (E.O.H., H.W.R.), two drakes and a duck on Feb. 24 (K.D.G.M., W.A.W.) and a duck on Feb. 28 (W.A.W.).
- M. Kempton Res., two drakes on Jan. 12, a drake and a duck on Feb. 8, four drakes and three ducks on Mar. 16 (J.W.I.). Staines Res., a duck on Aug. 17 (B.A.R.).
- S. Beddington S.F., a pair on Feb. 2 (A.C.G.P.). Island Barn Res., a drake on Feb. 20 (W.J.L.S.). Walton Res., recorded from Feb. 1-Mar. 22, max. eight on Mar. 16 (P.W.E.C., J.W.I., W.J.L.S., J.A.W.).

- T. Barn Elms Res., up to three from Jan. 11-Feb. 22 and up to five from Mar. 22-Apr. 8. Four drakes were seen on the Thames off Syon Park on Jan. 8 (A.E.H.) and flocks were frequently noted on the river between Wandsworth and Kew from Feb. 17-Mar. 12, the largest being 11 at Kew on Feb. 23, 18 at Wandsworth on Mar. 1 and c. 17 at Chiswick Eyot on Mar. 9 (many observers). Ten drakes and 16 ducks were counted on Barn Elms Res. and the Thames at Putney on Feb. 23 (R.W.Hn.). Lonsdale Rd. Res., a duck on Dec. 30 (D.C.P.).

### 332. Goldeneye.

- E. King George Res., one to six on most days between Jan. 5 and Feb. 20 (P.F.C.R.). Walthamstow Res., one to three between Feb. 1 and Mar. 30 (E.O.H. *et al.*).
- H. Hamper Mill, two immature birds on Mar. 16 (J.A.B.).
- B./M. Harefield, a drake on the River Colne on Mar. 2 (T.B.).
- M. Hampton, Grand Junction Res., nine on Feb. 23, six on Mar. 9 (J.W.L.) and one on Nov. 18 (E.W.P.). Kempton Res., four on Dec. 21 (E.W.P.). Staines Res., up to 12 from Jan. to May 18; a brown-headed bird on July 26 (R.daC., E.G.P.) and up to seven from Sept. 6 to the end of the year.
- K. Ruxley G.P., a drake on Mar. 2 (A.H.W., M.W., F.J.H.).
- S. Beddington S.F., a drake on Feb. 16 and 22 (T.R.E., A.G.G.T.). Island Barn Res., noted from Jan. 4-Apr. 5, max. seven on Feb. 20; W. Molesey Reservoirs, up to seven from Jan. 4-Apr. 4, numbers rising to 13/14 on Mar. 8/9; one on Nov. 1 and two on Dec. 20 (P.W.E.C., H.F.G., *et al.*).
- T. Barn Elms Res., a brown-headed bird from Jan. 7-23 and from Mar. 22-Apr. 1; one from Nov. 9-11 (G.C.L., E.G.P. *et al.*). Chertsey, four on Feb. 25 (W.J.L.S.). Thames from Hammersmith to Kew, one to four from Jan. 7-Mar. 15 (many observers) but over 20 at Hammersmith on Feb. 23 (F.M.F.).

### 334. Long-tailed Duck.

- M./S. A female or immature seen at Walton Res. on Feb. 25, Mar. 9 and 16 (H.F.G., J.W.L., W.J.L.S) was not present on Mar. 22, but on that date J.W.L. saw a bird which he considered to be the same at Kempton Park Res., about two miles north. This bird remained at Kempton until Apr. 27 and was seen on the same part of the reservoir on each of five visits (J.W.L., E.W.P.).

A bird in similar plumage which frequented the lake in St James's Park was noted on at least 43 days between Mar. 23 and July 24 (E.M.N., W.G.T., *et al.*). These dates, when compared with those for the Walton/Kempton bird, show an overlap of some five weeks and it is therefore certain that two individuals were present. Between June 12 and July 1

there is a gap in the records from St James's Park, but during this time a female or immature was seen on June 16, 21, 22 and 29 at Barn Elms Res. (H.F.G., G.C.L., A.G.G.T.). One, presumably the same, was seen in Regent's Park on July 16 (E.C.W.) and again in St James's Park on eight dates in July, becoming tame enough to feed with the park ducks on bread thrown by visitors.

A similar bird was recorded on the Thames between Hammer-smith and Kew from Mar. 1-9 (J.S.C., R.H.S. *et al*) and one, possibly the same, between Southwark and Hungerford Bridges on Mar. 14, 15, 17 and 18 (F.J.H., R.B.W.). This was unlikely to have been the Walton/Kempton example, especially as on Mar. 9 one was reported from both Chiswick and Walton, but it may have been the bird which later resorted to St James's Park.

### 339. Common Scoter.

- E. King George Res., a duck on Feb. 8 (P.F.C.R.). Walthamstow Res., one on Mar. 15 (H.W.R., W.A.W.). Wennington, one on the Thames on Mar. 8 (M.J.A.). West Thurrock, one on the Thames on Apr. 12 (M.J.A.).
- M. Staines Res., seven drakes on July 13 (R.daC., E.G.P.).
- T. Barn Elms Res., a drake, a duck and an immature on Apr. 7 (R.H.M.R.), a duck on Apr. 12 (T.B.) and a drake on July 5 (B.A.R., W.G.T.).

### 340. Velvet-Scoter.

- E. King George Res., three drakes and a duck were found dead between Feb. 8 and 20; a drake was seen alive on Feb. 9 (P.F.C.R.). This is the first record for the London Area since 1937.

### 342. Goosander.

- E. Dagenham G.P., a drake on Apr. 27 (M.J.A.). King George Res., present Jan. 1 to Mar. 28, max. 10 on Feb. 15; one on Nov. 14 and three on Nov. 26 (P.F.C.R., W.A.W.). Walthamstow Res., present Feb. 1 to Mar. 15, max. seven on Mar. 15 (E.O.H. *et al.*); one on Dec. 23 and two on Dec. 27 (K.D.G.M., P.F.C.R., W.A.W.).
- H. Hamper Mill, six on Mar. 16 (J.A.B.). Stocker's Lake, Rickmansworth, two on Jan. 19 (J.A.B.), four on Jan. 26 (T.B.).
- M. Ashford G.P., two on Dec. 20 (W.G.T.). Brent Res., two on Mar. 23 (P.R.K.) and one on Nov. 29 (T.B.). Kempton Res., one on Jan. 5 and eight on Mar. 16 (J.W.L.). Queen Mary Res., a flock of c. 250 on Feb. 8 (G.B.) increased to c. 600 during the month (C.H.); two on Nov. 20 (D.J.M.) and ten on Dec. 20 (R.daC.). Staines Res., noted from Jan. 2-Apr. 6, max. 20 on Jan. 11; and from Oct. 31-Dec. 27, max. 12 on Dec. 20.

- S. Ham G.P., a drake and two red-headed birds on Jan. 26 (R.H.S.). Island Barn Res., noted from Jan. 4-Feb. 20 and from Mar. 22-Apr. 5, max. 66 on Jan. 4 (P.W.E.C., W.J.L.S.). Walton Res., up to 23 from Jan. 4-Feb. 8, 180 on Feb. 25, 550 (c. 160 drakes) on Feb. 28, 397 (66 drakes) on Mar. 1, 516 (96 drakes) on Mar. 8, 400 on Mar. 9, 300 on Mar. 16 and 2/4 until Apr. 4 (P.W.E.C., J.W.L., B.A.R., W.J.L.S.); six on Nov. 23 (F.J.L.M.) and three on Dec. 7 (A.V.T.).
- T. Barn Elms Res., present from Jan. 1-29, maxima 80 (six drakes) on Jan. 16 and 60 (three drakes) on Jan. 23; and from Feb. 28 to Apr. 8, max. 21 (one drake) on Mar. 22; one red-headed bird on May 7 and 8. Lonsdale Rd. Res., up to 12 from Jan. 12-21. Noted on the river between Chiswick Eyot and Hampton Court from Jan. 7-Mar. 15; 23 at Kew on Feb. 8, and 29 (six drakes) on Mar. 13 (many observers).

### 343. Red-breasted Merganser.

- E. Walthamstow Res., one on Feb. 15 (E.O.H., D.A.T.M., W.A.W.), two on Feb. 19 (K.D.G.M., W.A.W.), one on Feb. 22 (E.O.H.) and Mar. 15 (H.W.R.).
- M. Brent Res., a red-headed bird on Nov. 29 (T.B.).
- S. Island Barn Res., two (one drake) on Feb. 20 (W.J.L.S.). Walton Res., one on Feb. 1 and four (one drake) on Mar. 1 (P.W.E.C.).
- T. Isleworth Eyot, a drake on Mar. 8 (R.H.S.). Hampton Court, a red-headed bird and a drake from Mar. 15-23 (D.C.P., W.P.C.T., J.A.W.). Barn Elms Res., a drake on Mar. 25 (H.M.R.K.).

### 344. Smew.

- E. King George Res., two to four between Feb. 15 and Mar. 9 (P.F.C.R.). Walthamstow Res., 89 on Jan. 4, 15/30 from Feb. 1-24, two on Mar. 30 and one on Apr. 5 (K.D.G.M., W.A.W. *et al.*); a red-headed bird on Aug. 2, 9, 17 and 23, a drake and three red-headed birds on Dec. 23 and four red-headed birds on Dec. 27 (K.D.G.M., H.W.R., W.A.W.).
- H. Hamper Mill, a drake on Jan. 18 (A.C.F.), a drake and a red-headed bird on Feb. 2 (W.D.M.) and nine (five drakes) on Mar. 16 (J.A.B.). West Hyde, one red-headed bird on Jan. 26 (T.B.).
- B./H./M. On Mar. 2 T.B. saw two at Iver-Denham lock, on the canal forming the boundary of Bucks. and Middlesex; and six (four drakes) on the Herts./Middlesex boundary canal near West Hyde.
- M. Ashford G.P., a drake on Dec. 20 (W.G.T.). Brent Res., noted from Jan. to Mar. 15, max. 28 on Feb. 16 (J.A.B., T.B., C.F.T.); one red-headed on Nov. 16 (A.M.M.). Hampton, Grand Junction Res., present Oct.-Dec., max. 14 on Dec. 4 (E.W.P.). Queen Mary Res., four drakes and three

brown-heads on Dec. 20 (R.daC.). Staines Res., present Jan. and Feb., max. 12 on Jan. 11 (F.M.F.) and up to five in Nov. and Dec.

- S. Island Barn Res., two on Feb. 20 and five on Mar. 22. West Molesey, present on the reservoirs from Jan. to Mar. 16, maxima 89 (27 drakes) on Mar. 1 and 70 (30 drakes) on Mar. 9; up to seven on the gravel pits, Jan. 4/22 (many observers).
- T. Barn Elms Res., up to 78 present all through Jan., numbers seldom falling below 40; not more than nine during Feb., three on Mar. 18, one on Apr. 1; again recorded from Nov. 30 to the end of the year, max. 30 on Dec. 26. Lonsdale Rd. Res., up to eight from Jan. 12 to Apr. 1 and again present from Nov. 28 to Dec. 31, max. 30 (12 drakes) on Dec. 20. River Thames, noted from Hammersmith to Kew between Feb. 8 and Mar. 9, maxima 18 at Kew on Feb. 23 and ten at Chiswick Eyot on Feb. 26 (many observers); Chertsey, two red-headed birds on Feb. 25 (W.J.L.S.).

#### 346. Cormorant.

- H. Hamper Mill, two on Sept. 14 (W.D.M.).
- M. Up to four recorded from Brent, Hampton, Queen Mary and Staines Reservoirs, Jan.-May and Aug.-Oct.
- S. Walton Res., one on Jan. 4 and Mar. 22 (P.W.E.C., J.W.L.). Ham G.P., one on Apr. 25 and two on Apr. 27 (E.Mc.E., R.H.S.).
- T. Many records Jan. to Apr. 13 from Barn Elms Res. and the river between Putney and Kew; most often on Syon House reach, where they were frequently seen perching in trees and roosted in black poplars (R.H.S.); max. 14 on Mar. 16 (T.B.).

#### 348. Shag.

- T. One, possibly two, at Chiswick Eyot and Kew from Mar. 2-18 (T.B., R.H.M.R., W.G.T., W.A.W.).

#### Petrel (species not determined).

- T. A bird seen flying and on the water between Waterloo and Blackfriars Bridges on Jan. 15 was certainly one of the smaller white-rumped petrels but unfortunately could not be specifically identified (F.J.H.).

#### 370. Great Crested Grebe.

See p. 35 for a report on breeding season status.

#### 371. Red-necked Grebe.

- E. Walthamstow Res., one on Feb. 8 and 10 (K.D.G.M.) and one on Nov. 17 and 27 (W.A.W.). King George Res., one seen on Feb. 16 and found dead on Feb. 24 (P.C.F.R.).
- T. Isleworth Eyot, one on Jan. 31 (J.S.C.).



**373. Slavonian Grebe.**

- E. King George Res., one on Feb. 18 (P.F.C.R.). Walthamstow Res., one on Feb. 8 (E.O.H., D.A.T.M.) and two on Feb. 12 (E.O.H., K.D.G.M.).
- M. Brent Res., one in nearly full winter plumage was seen at close range on Sept. 11 (T.B.). Staines Res., one on Jan. 16 (R.W.Hn.).

**374 Black-necked Grebe.**

- E. Walthamstow Res., one from Jan. 4 to Feb. 12 (many observers); one to four between Aug. 7 and Sept. 25 (S.A., W.A.W.).
- H. Elstree Res., one on Jan. 18 (J.A.B.).
- M. Staines Res., recorded on many dates between Apr. 22 and Nov. 15; maxima for each month are as follows: Apr., one; May, two; June, three; July, eight; Aug., six; Sept., eleven; Oct., five; Nov. two; one on Dec. 20. Two birds in almost complete summer plumage were present from May 3 until at least June 16 and one in partial summer plumage was seen on July 5 and 12 (many observers). King George VI Res., one on Dec. 12 (H.M.R.K.).

**378. Black-throated Diver.**

- E. King George Res., one found dead on Feb. 25 (P.F.C.R.).

**379. Red-throated Diver.**

- E. King George Res., two on Feb. 9 (P.F.C.R.). Walthamstow Res., one on Feb. 14 (H.W.R.); one, presumably the same, was found dead on Feb. 15 (E.O.H.).
- S. Island Barn and Walton Reservoirs, two found dead on Mar. 1 (P.W.E.C.).

**381. Stock-Dove.**

- M. Chiswick, one watched for c. 20 minutes on Oct. 4 frequently alighted on the Thames and rose almost immediately by thrusting its wings on the water (K.A.L.). Previous records of this behaviour have been given in *B.B.*, 40, pp. 119, 187, 254.

**383. Turtle-Dove.**

- M. Staines New Res., c. 35 on the bed of the unfilled reservoir on Aug. 7 (R.J.R.); one on Sept. 21 (J.A.B.).
- S. Early date, one on Wimbledon Golf Course on Apr. 24 (J.A.W.). Headley, c. 50 together on June 29; one or two sang from the ground and one was seen in display-flight (F.M.F.).

**386. Bar-tailed Godwit.**

- E. West Thurrock Marsh, two on Apr. 12 (M.J.A.).
- M. Perry Oaks S.F., one in summer plumage on May 3 (J.A.B., G.M.H., C.H., W.G.T.).

**387. Black-tailed Godwit.**

K. Elmers End S.F., 13 on a flooded field on Mar. 15 left early the next day (A.M.-J., C.F.T.).

**388. Common Curlew.**

Recorded as usual on spring and autumn passage, max. nine in flight over Harold Wood, Essex, on July 12. An increase of winter records coincident with the cold spell early in the year:

E. King George Res., one on Feb. 9 (P.C.F.R.). Rainham, one on Mar. 15; Wennington, one on Mar. 8 (M.J.A.).

M. Brentford, two on Mar. 16 (R.H.M.R.). Syon House, three on Feb. 3 (R.H.S.).

K. Elmers End S.F., one on Feb. 24, 28 and Mar. 9 (C.F.T.). Southfleet, one on Dec. 7 (J.S.S.B.).

S. Beddington S.F., 22 on Jan. 7 and up to ten from Feb. 9 to Mar. 7 (C.B.A., A.C.G.P., C.F.T.). Kew, up to eight feeding on the golf course, Feb. 13-16 (J.W.L., E.G.P., D.C.P.) and two by the river on Mar. 16 (T.B.). Walton S.F., two on Jan. 22 (B.A.R.).

**389. Whimbrel.**

M. Staines New Res., one flushed from a pool in the shingle bed on May 11 (R.daC., D.A.T.M., E.G.P.).

T. Stone Marshes, one passing along Thames on Sept. 7 (J.S.S.B.). Barn Elms Res., one on May 8 (T.B., R.H.M.R.).

**393. Woodcock.**

H. Elstree Res., one flushed from near water's edge on Nov. 15 (E.H.W.).

M. Ruislip, two on Poor's Field on Apr. 7 (J.A.B.). Bushy Park, flushed many times by the keeper all the year round (E.W.P.). Up to three recorded in winter from Enfield, Harrow Weald, Hampstead Heath, and Stanmore.

K. Elmers End, one on Feb. 22 (C.F.T.).

S. Tatsfield, two roding on Apr. 17 and one on June 1 (K.R.C.). Noted during the cold spell early in the year at Bookham and Epsom Commons, Limpsfield, Mitcham Watermeads, Morden (3), Oxshott and Richmond Park. Addington, one on Mar. 19 and Apr. 3 (T.R.E.). Godstone, one on Mar. 22 (K.R.C.). Walton Heath, one on Mar. 13 (A.C.G.P.). Wimbledon Golf Course, one on Mar. 9 (J.A.W.). Chaldon, one for some days in Dec. (R.O.B., H.F.G., E.McE.).

**398. Jack Snipe.**

E. Barking, one to two at Mayesbrook Park G.P. on seven occasions between Oct. 25 and Nov. 30 (H.E.A.).

H. Colney Street, one at Moor Mill G.P. on Jan. 26 (W.D.M.).

- M. King George VI Res., one on Nov. 15, two on Nov. 16 and Dec. 20 (J.A.B., C.A.W.).
- K. Ruxley G.P., two on Jan. 18, one on Feb. 3 and 23 (F.J.H., A.H.W., M.W.).
- S. Beddington S.F., up to four from Feb. 8 to Mar. 7 (L.I.C., A.C.G.P., C.F.T.). Epsom S.F., three on Feb. 25 and one on Mar. 2 (H.B.).

**402. Turnstone.**

- M. Kempton Res., one in summer plumage on May 19 (E.W.P.); Staines New Res., one on May 15 (R.daC., E.G.P.) and one on Aug. 3 (C.A.W.).

**403. Knot.**

- M. Staines Res., one in partial summer plumage on May 2 (D.G., W.G.T.) and two on Sept. 21 (J.A.B.).

**404/5. Dunlin.**

- E. Walthamstow Res., one on Aug. 24 (E.R.P.) and one to two from Sept. 5 to 18 (S.A., W.A.W.).
- M. Brent Res., one on Sept. 11 (T.B.). Perry Oaks S.F., one on May 3 and 10 (J.A.B., C.H.). Staines Moor, 19 on Apr. 27 and one on July 19 (C.A.W.). Staines Res., up to five between Apr. 22 and May 11; Staines New Res., single birds and parties up to six seen Apr./May, on June 5 and 22, and July/Aug. (many observers).
- K. Erith, ten near mouth of the River Darent on May 3 (P.R.K.).
- S. Beddington S.F., up to six during the cold spell (L.I.C., A.C.G.P.). Walton Res., eight on Apr. 4 (B.A.R.). Walton S.F., one on Aug. 8 (P.A.D.H.).
- T. Barn Elms Res., one or more on Apr. 26 and one on July 28 (T.B., E.G.P.).

**407. Little Stint.**

- M. Staines New Res., one on Aug. 17 (J.A.B., W.G.T.).

**[409. Temminck's Stint.**

- S. Walton S.F., a wader seen briefly on Aug. 17 was certainly a stint and probably this species (P.A.D.H.).]

**416. Sanderling.**

- M. Staines Res., one on Apr. 4 (C.F.T.) was in early transition from winter plumage; one on May 12 (J.A.B.) was in partial summer plumage, with upperparts still grey and breast heavily streaked pale chestnut. A similar bird was seen on the bed of Staines New Res. on May 19 (R.C.H.) and one in almost complete summer plumage on June 5 (R.J.R.).
- T. Barn Elms Res., one on May 5 (R.H.M.R.).

**417. Ruff.**

- E. Walthamstow Res., two on Aug. 23, one to two on Sept. 5, 8 and 18 (H.W.R., W.A.W.).
- M. Perry Oaks S.F., one on May 3; one to four from Aug. 31 to Nov. 1 (J.A.B., C.H., C.A.W.). Staines New Res., single birds from Aug. 7 to Sept. 7 (T.B., R.H.M.R. *et al.*); four on Aug. 27 and eleven (the largest flock recorded for the London Area) on Sept. 3 (R.J.R.).
- S. Beddington S.F., one on wet grass field, May 15 (C.B.A.).

**421. Common Sandpiper.**

- Passage through the Area lasted from Apr. 18 to June 5 in the spring and from July 5 to Oct. 25 in the autumn; max. 18 at Barn Elms Res. on Aug. 16 (B.A.R.).
- E. Walthamstow Res., one on Jan. 4 (K.D.G.M., W.A.W.) was evidently the bird reported on Dec. 28, 1946 (see *I.B.R.*, 1946, p. 25).
- M. Queen Mary Res., one on Nov. 20 (A.M., D.J.M.). Staines Res., one on Dec. 20 (J.A.B.).
- S. Richmond, one on the towpath on Feb. 8 (R.H.S.).

**423. Wood-Sandpiper.**

- M. Staines New Res., two present all afternoon on the bed of the unfilled reservoir on May 24 (R.J.R.).
- S. Walton S.F., one on Aug. 8 (P.A.D.H.).

**424. Green Sandpiper.**

- B. Colnbrook, one on June 21 (G.M.H., W.G.T.). Wraysbury, five at gravel pit on June 21 (A.G.G.T.).
- E. Dagenham, one on Oct. 25 (M.J.A.). Rainham, one by River Ingrebourne on Feb. 9; one at Berwick Pond on Apr. 20 (M.J.A.). Walthamstow Res., two on Apr. 27 (H.W.R.).
- H. Colney Street, four at Old Parkbury G.P. on Aug. 18 and three on Sept. 9 (E.H.W.). Rickmansworth, Stocker's Lake, one on Sept. 7 (T.B.), one on Nov. 30 and two on Dec. 14 (J.A.B.). Watford S.F., one on Nov. 8 (W.D.M.).
- M. Kempton Res., one on Jan. 25, Feb. 2, Mar. 9 and Apr. 20; two on Feb. 16 (J.W.L.). Perry Oaks S.F., one on Sept. 21 (J.A.B.) and three on Oct. 19 (C.A.W.). Poyle G.P., one on July 19 (R.daC.) and one on Aug. 17 (E.R.P.). Staines New Res., one on May 27 (R.J.R.); one to two between Aug. 12 and Sept. 21 (H.M.R.K., E.G.P., R.H.M.R., C.A.W.); eight on Sept. 5 (C.H.F.P.).
- K. Dartford, one on Littlebrook Marsh, July 25 (W.I.B.). Erith Marshes, one on Aug. 1 (P.R.K.). Stone Marshes, one on Sept. 7 (J.S.S.B.). Northfleet, one on floating piece of wood in flooded chalk-pit on Dec. 26 (J.S.S.B.).
- S. Walton S.F., three on July 29, seven on Aug. 8 and c. 12 on Aug. 17 (P.A.D.H.).

**431. Spotted Redshank.**

M. Staines New Res., one on Sept. 5 (R.J.R.).

**432. Greenshank.**

E. Rainham, two at Berwick Pond on Sept. 7 (M.J.A.). Walthamstow Res., one on Aug. 16, 23 and 24 (E.R.P., H.W.R., W.A.W.).

M. Brent Res., one on Sept. 6 and 11 (T.B., G.O.W.). Poyle G.P., one on May 15 (R.daC., E.G.P.). Staines Moor, Staines Res. and Staines New Res., one on Apr. 25 and one to five from July 12 to Oct. 5 (many observers).

S. Carshalton, one flew over suburban gardens, calling, on May 14 (C.B.A.).

T. Barn Elms Res., two on Aug. 10 (G.C.L.).

**435/6. Ringed Plover.**

E. Walthamstow Res., one on July 24 and 26 (W.A.W.); one on Sept. 5 (S.A., W.A.W.).

H. Colney Street, one at Moor Mill G.P. on May 12 (E.H.W.).

M. Brent Res., three on Sept. 20/21 (W.D.M., W.G.T.). Perry Oaks S.F., up to c. 10 on both migrations (C.H. *et al.*). Staines Moor, Staines Res. and Staines New Res., one to four between Apr. 25 and June 22 and up to eight from July 19 to Sept. 21 (many observers); 16 on Sept. 20 (C.A.W.).

K. Dartford, noted on Littlebrook Marsh on July 25 (W.I.B.). Erith, five at mouth of the River Darent on Apr. 29 (P.R.K.).

S. Walton S.F., seven on Aug. 17 (P.A.D.H.).

**438. Little Ringed Plover.**

There were 10-13 pairs in the London Area in 1947 and breeding was recorded for the fourth successive year. Seven nests were found, and there was evidence of four other broods. Breeding took place in at least three, probably four, localities in Middlesex and at one each in Essex and Kent. The last two are new county breeding records, but it seems likely that Little Ringed Plovers have bred unobserved, in Essex at least, in previous years. Birds reached the flight stage at the Essex and at one of the Middlesex sites, but the exact number is unknown. The young of at least two pairs apparently came to grief. (The Berkshire locality mentioned in the full report by E.R.P. in *B.B.*, 41, pp. 41-45, is outside the Society's Area).

**439. Kentish Plover.**

M. South-west Middlesex, an adult female on Sept. 3 (R.J.R., see also *B.B.*, 41, p. 28). This is the second record for the London Area.

**440/1. Golden Plover.**

- E. King George Res., two on Mar. 9 (P.C.F.R.). Waltham Marsh, a flock of c. 200 on Mar. 27 (W.G.T.).
- H. Colney Street, seven at Old Parkbury G.P. on Jan. 26 (W.D.M.) and eight over Moor Mill G.P. on Mar. 14 (W.G.T.); c. 80 on airfield on Dec. 20 (W.D.M.).
- M. Wembley, several passed over, calling, on Feb. 2 (R.H.M.R.). Colne Valley near Harefield, c. 30 flying S.W. on Apr. 6 and eight flying S.S.W. on Sept. 7 (S.C.). Staines Res., one on Sept. 27 (C.A.W.), two in flight on Oct. 26 (J.A.B.) and c. 7 flying N.W. on Nov. 23 (T.B.). Staines Moor and New Res., four on Aug. 22 and 24 (B.A.R., C.A.W.), three on Sept. 3 (R.J.R.) and one on Sept. 6 (C.A.W.).
- K. Elmers End S.F., four flew over, Mar. 9 (C.F.T.). Near Bexley, c. 25 passed over on Mar. 22 (D.F.O.). Southfleet, one on Dec. 29 (J.S.S.B.).
- S. Beddington S.F., up to 11 between Jan. 5 and Mar. 16 (R.T.P., A.C.G.P. *et al.*). Hurst Park, 12 or 13 on race-course, Mar. 15 (J.A.W.).

**444. Grey Plover.**

- M. Perry Oaks S.F., one in breeding dress on May 3 (J.A.B., G.M.H., C.H., W.G.T.).

**449. Lapwing.**

- S. Richmond Park, either five or six pairs nested, two apparently without success (E.G.P.). See *L.B.R.*, 1946, p. 27.

**452. Oystercatcher.**

- M. Brent Res., one on Apr. 3; Mill Hill, one passed over, calling, before sunrise on Aug. 19 (E.H.W.).
- T. Mortlake, one in flight over the river on Mar. 9 (B.A.R., W.G.T.).

**462. Black Tern.**

- E. Barking, one at Mayesbrook Park G.P., on May 21 and three on May 23 (H.E.A.). Chingford, one over aqueduct at S.E. end of King George Res. on Aug. 24 (E.R.P., W.A.W.). Walthamstow Res., one on Sept. 8 (W.A.W.).
- M. Staines Res., three in breeding dress on May 10 (F.C.B., R.C.H., C.A.W.) and two on Sept. 21 (J.A.B.). Staines New Res., two settled on the bed of the unfilled reservoir on May 13 (H.M.R.K.).
- T. Barn Elms Res., one on May 21 (R.H.M.R.), two on June 11 (G.C.L.), two on June 13 (C.D., C.H.) and one on Sept. 19 (G.C.L.).

**467. Sandwich Tern.**

- E. Walthamstow Res., one on Sept. 18 (S.A., W.A.W.).  
 M. Brent Res., one on May 24 (T.B.). Littleton, four over gravel pit in Charlton Lane on Apr. 25 and 26; eight over gravel pits south of Queen Mary Res. on Apr. 26 (E.W.P.).  
 T. Barn Elms Res., two on Sept. 1 and 25 on Sept. 19 (G.C.L.).

**469/470. Common/Arctic Terns.**

In April and May an inland passage of Common and Arctic Terns was noticed in many parts of the country. A ten-day period of persistently strong south-westerly winds set in on Apr. 19 and three days later terns were seen in the London Area; from then until May 11 they were recorded nearly every day. The largest numbers occurred from Apr. 26-30, on which day the wind changed to N.W. In succeeding days the wind, still strong, veered through north and east and by May 5 was southerly; with the change of wind the numbers of terns declined. The passage through the London Area was closely representative of that through the country as a whole (reported in *B.B.*, 41, pp. 167-173) and was especially notable for the high proportion of Arctic Terns, a species previously recorded in the Area only nine times since 1924. It has been shown (*B.B.*, 41, pp. 188-9) that because of the earliness of the passage some Arctic Terns still retained black tips to the bills as in winter. It is therefore possible that the list which follows may indicate too low a proportion of Arctic Terns.

*Spring passage:—*

- E. Walthamstow Res., four to six Arctics on Apr. 26 (E.T.N., W.A.W.) and one Arctic on Apr. 27 (H.W.R.).  
 M. Brent Res., of two to three from Apr. 23-25 at least one was a Common and one an Arctic (T.B., R.H.M.R.). Perry Oaks S.F., one Arctic on May 3 (J.A.B., G.M.H., W.G.T.). Staines New Res., three Common/Arctic on Apr. 25 (R.S.R.F., E.R.P.). Staines Res., seven on Apr. 25; twelve, of which five were Arctic (W.D.M.), on Apr. 27; up to five from May 3-11 (C.A.W. *et al.*).  
 S. Cobham, one on a private lake from Apr. 22-24 (per J.H.L.). Ham G.P., two on Apr. 25 (E.Mc.E.). Wimbledon Common, a probable Arctic over Rushmere on Apr. 25 (J.A.W.).  
 T. Barn Elms Res., five on Apr. 22 (T.B.); of 26 on Apr. 26 c. 20 were Arctic and at least two Common (T.B., C.D. *et al.*); 24 on Apr. 27, 15 on Apr. 28, 18 (five Arctic, R.H.M.R.) on Apr. 29; ten Arctic and one Common on Apr. 30 (R.H.M.R.); two Arctic and two Common on May 1 (T.B.); one Arctic on May 5 (C.H.); one on May 7 and eight on May 8.

*Autumn passage:—*

- E. Walthamstow Res., five to six on Sept. 18 (S.A., W.A.W.).  
 M. Brent Res., one on Aug. 17 (W.D.M.). Feltham G.P., two on July 12 (C.F.T., C.A.W.). Staines Res. and New Res., one to five between July 12 and Sept. 21 (R.daC., K.P.K., W.W.T.).  
 T. Barn Elms Res., ten on Aug. 2 were not seen the next day (F.J.L.M.); one on Aug. 4 showed no black tip to the bill and was considered to be Arctic (E.G.P.); two on Aug. 10 (F.J.L.M.), ten on Sept. 19 (G.C.L.), one on Oct. 4 (W.G.T.).

**471. Little Tern.**

- E. Walthamstow Res., one on Sept. 18 (W.A.W.).  
 M. Brent Res., one on May 6 (T.B., R.H.M.R.).  
 T. Barn Elms Res., one on Apr. 26 and seven on May 10 (R.H.M.R., A.G.G.T.).

**477. Little Gull.**

- T. Barn Elms Res., one immature stayed from May 6-10 and at times consorted with Common/Arctic Terns (12 observers); a second-year bird on July 21 was identified by wing markings and smaller size compared with a nearby immature Black-headed Gull (A.G.G.T.).

**478. Black-headed Gull.**

- M. Perry Oaks S.F., the colony reported in the *L.B.R.*, 1946, pp. 28-29 increased this year to c. 300 nesting pairs; 74 birds of the year were counted on June 4 (R.C.H., C.H., T.L.B. *et al.*; see also *B.B.*, 40, p. 285).

Another three overseas recoveries of birds ringed in London have been notified and there are eight other recoveries; with two exceptions all were ringed by T.L.B.

*Date and Place of Ringing.*                      *Date and Place of Recovery.*

- 17.xi.39—Westminster (ringed by W. D. Park)                      2.ix.47—Hullbridge on Crouch.  
 13.i.40—Westminster ..... —.xi.46—Karreback (Sjaelland), Denmark (*B.B.*, 40, p. 367).  
 2.xii.42—St James's Park ..... 19.x.47—Endelave, Denmark.  
 21.i.43—Westminster ..... —.xii.47—Barn Elms Res.  
 21.ii.43—Kew Gdns. .... 15.vi.46—Isle of Urk, Zuider Zee.  
 27.ii.44—Hammersmith ..... 21.xi.47—Kensington Gdns.  
 25.xi.44—Hammersmith ..... 12.xii.46—Hammersmith  
 12.xii.46—Hammersmith (ringed by B.A.R.)                      8.iii.47—Chelsea Embankment.  
 27.xi.44—St James's Park ..... 14.iii.47—Where ringed.  
 30.xii.45—Putney ..... 14.iii.47—Where ringed.  
 17.x.47—St James's Park ..... 11.xi.47—Where ringed.  
 A bird recovered and released in St James's Park by T.L.B. on 26.xi.43 had been ringed at Kiel, Germany, on 21.x.34.



**484/5. Lesser Black-backed Gull.**

The wintering of the species in the Area has been recorded regularly since 1936. Winter records for 1947 have been received from the Brent Res., Hampton Filter Beds, Beddington and Epsom Sewage Farms and the Thames at Hammersmith, mainly only in ones and twos but eleven at Hampton on Dec. 24. As usual, some of both the winter and passage birds were referred to the Scandinavian form.

**487. Glaucous Gull.**

T. Barn Elms Res., an adult female or fourth winter bird on Jan. 25 later flew to the Middlesex side of the Thames (C.A.W.). Hammersmith, one on the river on Feb. 23 (F.M.F.) was apparently a different example as the plumage was more obviously immature. Both birds were described as being noticeably larger than accompanying Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls.

**489. Kittiwake.**

T. Barn Elms Res., one on Jan. 21 (B.A.R.); one immature seen alive on Aug. 22 (J.McH.) and—presumably the same bird—dead on Aug. 27 (T.B., B.A.R.).

**503. Southern Puffin.**

T. Barn Elms Res., a juvenile seen dead by J.S.C. on Dec. 10.

**504. Corn-Crake.**

E. Epping Long Green (nr.), one on June 1 (H.W.R.).  
S. Oxshott, one heard several times and seen, early June (Mr and Mrs A. W. Rathbone per J.H.L.).

**509. Water-Rail.**

E. Rainham, one to two at Berwick Pond on seven dates between Jan. 7 and Mar. 29 (M.J.A., A.L.C.).  
H. Rickmansworth, Stocker's Lake, one on Jan. 29 (B.A.R.), one on Mar. 2 (T.B.) and two on Nov. 30 (J.A.B.). West Hyde, one on Jan. 29 (B.A.R.).  
K. Ruxley G.P., one wading openly in shallow water on Mar. 16 (F.J.H.) and one on Mar. 23 (A.H.W., M.W.).  
S. Beddington S.F. pond, one to three from Jan. 20 to Mar. 7 (G.B., A.E.H., A.C.G.P., C.F.T.); and one, very vocal, on Apr. 26 (A.G.G.T.).

**519. Red-legged Partridge.**

E. Chingford, one to two between May 24 and 28 (H.W.R., W.A.W.); one on June 7 and 12 (E.R.P.).  
H. Colney Street, five on Nov. 29 (W.D.M.).  
M. Staines, one pair bred (C.A.W.).  
K. Dartford Marsh, two pairs on May 6 (W.I.B.).  
S. Headley, one on May 4 (P.W.E.C.). Near Botley Hill, two on Oct. 6 (H.F.G.).

**520. Quail.**

- H. A pair bred at Shepherd's Lane, near Rickmansworth. Careful observations were made by K.M.D., who first heard the male calling at the end of June. By late July a strong clear call of three syllables was being uttered which the observer described as "whipper-whip" or "wh-hüpe-per-whüp." On Aug. 27 a good view was obtained of one of the adults leading five to seven chicks out of covert and its small size was particularly noticed. On Sept. 2 the driver of the binder and the gardener each reported having seen a covey of "very tiny partridges" a week previously when the wheat was being cut. The record, which is well documented, is the fifth in the London Area since 1924 and the first established case of breeding. (For a note on status in the county as a whole see *B.B.*, 38, p. 250).
- M. Inner London, one was picked up in Warwick Square on Sept. 18 (The Supt., Zoological Gdns.).

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## Black Redstarts in the London Area, 1947.

By P. W. E. CURRIE.

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*Introduction.* Black Redstarts have now bred for six successive years in the City. In 1947 six pairs are known to have done so and there is a possibility that two other pairs may have bred; all these pairs bred as usual within three-quarters of a mile of St Paul's Cathedral.

*Winter Records in Inner London.* One male apparently spent the winter in the Cripplegate area, being seen on Nov. 26, 1946, and on Jan. 20 and 22 and Feb. 28 of this year. The description of his plumage agrees with that of the male of pair I described below.

*Dates of Arrival and Departure.* The males apparently arrived and took up territory about the end of March and the first week in April. No females were seen in the breeding area until the last week of April. The last bird, a female, was seen in the area on Oct. 23.

*Ringling.* Experience this year has shown that the young of this species are very prone to leave the nest prematurely if disturbed, for example, by being removed for ringling—see pairs I and II below. In view of the mortality that is known to have resulted from this cause, it is considered that nestlings of this species should not be ringed.

*Summary of Breeding Records.* In the Cripplegate area four pairs are known to have bred (Nos. I-IV below). One pair bred in the Fetter Lane area (No. V) and another pair almost certainly in the Walbrook area (No. VI). There is some evidence that a pair bred in the area of St Mary's, Aldermanbury, and another pair may have done so in the area of St Paul's.

I *London Wall, East of Wood Street.* Probably this male stayed in the area through the winter. His territory abutted on No. II, and two males were seen chasing each other on March 28. No female was seen until April 29. The completed but empty nest was found on a girder in a basement on May 6. On May 16 the female was sitting tight and five eggs were counted on May 21.

The young are not known to have hatched before May 28. On June 4 the five young were ringed; one left the nest but was replaced. On June 5 another observer found three young in a hole on the ground; these had gone on June 6, but two young were still in the nest on June 6 and 7. On June 7 one of the young was found dead in a crevice on the ground.

On June 28 Mr L. Parmenter removed from this nest a dropping which contained insect remains. Among these Mr L. G. Payne was able to identify the elytra of a beetle, *Amara (Cyrtonotus) convexiusculus* S., which he had found running on open ground among debris on the same date.

The second nest of this pair was not found, but on July 17 the male of this pair, easily recognisable by his conspicuous grey-white crown and large wing patch, was seen feeding two very recently fledged young just north of the first site. On July 18 the pair were seen feeding three or four young, and the family remained in the area at least until July 29.

II *Monkwell Street, West of Wood Street.* First seen on March 28, this male, a very dark bird with small wing patches, had taken up territory by April 1. The female was first seen on April 26. On May 17 the female was watched to a crack in the brickwork of a building about fifteen feet above ground level. On May 31 one or more very recently fledged birds were being fed by this pair in the basements below this building.

No second nest was found, but in the area east of Wood Street and south of the territory of pair I a female was seen on July 11 and 14 feeding young not more than a few days out of the nest. On July 17 two young were seen being fed. On this day the presumed second brood of pair I were much younger than these birds. This family remained together at least until July 26.

From June 27 to July 9 a pair with a brood of four young were present in the area round and to the south of St Mary's, Aldermanbury. The male was described as "very black." This brood, which was several days out of the nest when first seen, does not fit in with any other pair and probably represents an unlocated pair. It is given here since it is not certain whether this or the last represents the second brood of pair II.

III *Jewin Crescent area.* The male of this pair was first seen on April 8. No female was seen until May 17 when the nest was found in an iron pipe in a basement, containing five young not more than three or four days old. On May 27 three of the young were ringed; the others scrambled up the pipe out of reach. Some of the young seem to have left the nest the same day. On May 31 the empty nest was removed, and was found to contain two dead young birds, the one ringed and the other not. From ten pupae found in the remains of the nest Mr C. H. Colyer bred one *Calliphora erythrocephalus* Mg. ♀, and one ♂ and three ♀♀ *Sarcophagus* sp. which could not be certainly identified.

On May 31 one or more young were being fed about fifty yards to the north of the nest site. The female was seen to fly up to the sill over a second floor window, where a nearly complete nest was found. The nest was still empty on June 6, but on June 13 it contained five eggs. On June 28 it contained five young not more than three days old. On July 7 a visitor put his hand in the nest and one young bird flew out, but on July 8 some young were still being fed in the nest. On July 9 at least two young were being fed in the basements nearby, and some young remained in the area until the end of the month.

IV *Bridgewater Square.* This pair was not located until May 21. On May 31 the female was tracked to the top (fifth) floor of a building where she was seen carrying food and removing faeces, and young were heard calling. As the female would not visit the nest while an observer was in the room, it was impossible to locate it exactly. No fledglings of this brood were seen.

On July 12 both birds of the pair were seen visiting the same room with food and removing faeces. On July 24 the male was seen with at least two young in the neighbouring basements.

V *Fetter Lane*. This pair was first seen on May 7. The first nest was found, in a hollow brick in a ceiling, on May 23 when it contained five eggs. From June 10 to 16 the young were being fed in the nest, which they had left by June 23. The male continued to feed them at least until July 9.

The second nest was found, in a similar position, on July 16, when it contained four young about one week old. These are believed to have left the nest on July 29. On August 7 both parents and all four young were seen. The female remained in the area until Oct. 1 and the male until Oct. 8.

VI *Walbrook area*. A male sang regularly in this area from May 27 throughout June, but it was not until June 30 that a female was seen searching for food. On July 5 a female was seen feeding one fledgling recently out of the nest. One young bird was seen on July 6. On July 8 a female was seen with two others believed to be young. In view of the distance from all other known breeding pairs, it seems probable that a pair bred in this area. The young do not seem to wander far from the nest site so long as they are being fed by the parents.

#### *Non-breeding Records, Inner London.*

A. *Cripplegate area*. From April 26 to May 31 a male, believed from his plumage to be a first-year bird, sang over a wide area between Moorgate Station and Whitbread's Brewery. After May 31 no male was seen in this area, but from June 28 and through July a bird in similar plumage was singing in the Aldermanbury-Addle Street area.

B. *St Paul's-Paternoster Row*. One or perhaps two males sang in this area from May 3 to July 4. A female was seen in Foster Lane in company with a male on July 8, and on July 12 a female was seen off Bread Street feeding a recently emerged fledgling. There are, however, no other records of female or young from this area, and it must, therefore, be regarded as possible but not proven that a pair bred here.

C. *Temple*. A male was heard singing on May 16, 18 and 22 and a female was seen on May 18, but there is no subsequent record.

D. *Miscellaneous*. Males were heard singing as follows:—Cheapside-Gresham Street: May 5, for some days at the end of June, and again on July 17. Glasshouse Yard-Charterhouse Square: July 4 and 8. London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine: April 25. Eccentric Club, Ryder Street, Pall Mall: May 1. Red Lion Square: May 23. Cannon Street Station: May 24, at five o'clock in the morning, before dawn.

E. *Outer London*. There are only three records in the breeding season: a male at Wimbledon on April 19; a male believed to have been heard singing at Woolwich on June 28; and a male at Elmers End Sewage Farm on April 26.

I have to thank particularly Mr S. D. Herington for his notes on the Cripplegate area, and Mr F. J. Holroyde for information about the Fetter Lane pair. I must thank, also, the numerous members who have taken part in the Cripplegate survey of the Ecological Section, whose observations were communicated verbally, and the following who have sent in notes:—A. H. G. Alston, A. J. Beamish, H. Bentham, D. W. Bishop, Prof. P. A. Buxton, J. L. Chaworth Musters, A. Chopping, J. M. Cullen, C. Dolley, T. Gascoigne, A. G. Hancock, H. H. S. Hayward, R. C. Homes, J. Howe, Miss L. J. Johns, G. C. Low, D. J. May, J. Mead, E. H. Mitcham, J. O. Owens, Miss G. Parks, E. R. Parrinder, D. C. Pegram, E. G. Pedler, J. Philips, W. G. Teagle, H. Tekke, C. J. Turner, E. H. Warmington, R. B. Warren, C. A. White, C. Wontner-Smith.

# The Census of Great Crested Grebes, 1947.

Report by E. R. PARRINDER.

IN the summer of 1946 a census of Great Crested Grebes (*Podiceps c. cristatus*) was made throughout the London Area, as part of the sample census organised by the British Trust for Ornithology, and a summary of the results was published in the *London Bird Report* for 1946, pp. 32-35. The census took a team of 43 observers to a total of 178 waters, and needed a good deal of organisation at a time when many bird-watchers prefer to go farther afield.

A similar count, but on a smaller scale, was planned for 1947, but it soon became obvious that the severe winter of 1946-47 had had a serious effect on the Grebe population in many parts of the country, and the B.T.O. asked us to cover as much of our area as possible. In fact, all but twelve of the waters inhabited by Great Crested Grebes in 1946 were counted again in 1947, and in addition Grebes were found at six waters which were not included in the previous census.

The table given below shows the comparative totals for each county in 1946 and in 1947. It will be noticed that the figures given for the 1946 census do not agree with those published in last year's *London Bird Report*: the major reason for the difference is that, to give comparable figures, the waters counted in one year only have been excluded from the table. The 1946 figures have also been amended slightly as a result of a change in policy regarding the dates for making the census. Experience in the last two years has shown that passage of Great Crested Grebes seems to continue at least until the end of May, and on or near June 7th has now been chosen as the most suitable time for making the counts. As a consequence, some of the 1946 figures have been reduced, where other counts taken nearer to June 7th are available; the effect of the alterations is to reduce the figure for total adults from 356 (*L.B.R.*, 1946, p. 34) to 346.

					Total Adults	
					1946	1947
Bucks.	...	...	...	...	27	21
Essex	...	...	...	...	18	12
Herts.	...	...	...	...	56	41
Kent	...	...	...	...	7	2
Middlesex	...	...	...	...	111	104
Surrey	...	...	...	...	59	48
					278	228

The 1947 figures show a decrease of 18% over 1946. A small part of this decrease in the London Area is due to waters, especially gravel pits, becoming unsuitable by being partially or completely filled, or by in-

creased human interference; but it seems certain that the bulk of the decline, which was also noticeable in other parts of the country, can be attributed to the severe winter of 1946-47. In the London Area some of the smaller waters were still frozen over in mid-March, at a time when many of the Grebes would normally have returned to their breeding sites.

The decrease discussed above is in the total number of adults, breeding and non-breeding, present in the breeding season, but the number of pairs reported as breeding actually shows an increase in 1947, the comparable figures being 58 pairs in 1946 and 63 pairs in 1947. This apparent increase in breeding birds despite a decrease in total numbers may or may not be significant. It has been found difficult at many of the gravel pits, where there are inaccessible islets, to be certain if Grebes are breeding or not, especially if only one or two visits can be made, and it seems reasonably certain that the 1946 figures were unnaturally low.

It will be interesting to see how long it is before Great Crested Grebes recover, if they do, from the setback they have suffered, and it is to be hoped that sufficient help will be forthcoming to enable a complete census to be made each year, at least for the next eight seasons.

In addition to most of those mentioned in the 1946 Report, who again gave invaluable help, thanks are due to the following for information and assistance in 1947:—R. S. Ashley, W. Donald Bedford, E. A. Bowles, A. C. Frost, J. W. Landells, D. J. May, W. D. Melluish, B. Sage, R. B. Warren.

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## The Food and Feeding Movements of London Mallards.

By E. O. HÖHN.

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**T**HESE notes are based on the contents of gullet and stomach (*oesophagus*, *proventriculus* and *ventriculus*) of forty-eight Mallards (*Anas p. platyrhyncha*) of both sexes, shot (for the purpose of another investigation) in St James's and Regent's Parks, London, between May and August, 1944, from October 1944 to December 1945, and during the summer of 1946. I am indebted to Dr T. W. Campbell and also to the staff of the British Museum (Natural History) for considerable assistance in the examination of the food remains.

It is realised that these data will not reflect the full range of food material of Mallards living in more natural conditions. On the other hand, the diet of these birds, which live in a habitat in which the variety of food is limited, is of ecological interest if compared with information obtained from what are generally considered wild Mallard. In this connection some preliminary remarks on the status of the species in the Metropolitan area are necessary. Mallards are common throughout London, being found in all public parks which have some ornamental water, as well as on the Thames from about Charing Cross upwards

and on certain smaller rivers and canals. They breed on the larger London reservoirs and in many of the parks, where they are frequently very tame and take bread from visitors. There is no evidence that London park Mallards were originally introduced. Indeed, this is most unlikely as the decoy in St James's Park lake was in use for wild duck of various species in the 17th century.

No pinioned Mallards are kept on any of the London waters and local movements for feeding undoubtedly occur, such as from St James's Park to the Thames near by at low tide. The population of the parks certainly fluctuates seasonally. For example, Mr T. Hinton, in charge of the waterfowl at St James's Park, finds a definite increase in the number of Mallards at the lake in winter. In the summer of 1944 I ringed eleven Mallards here, both young and adults, and as none of these birds has been seen subsequently, a fairly definite degree of dispersal seems probable. Mr Hinton finds flighting a regular twice daily occurrence from September to late November at St James's Park. At these periods the majority of the St James's Park Mallards leave at dusk for feeding areas as yet unknown, returning to the park about dawn. I have had no opportunity of seeing this flighting myself but it may be observed from the bridge over the lake and the subject deserves investigation by members of the Society. Not only should the occurrence of flighting be independently confirmed but some attempt be made at plotting flight lines. Mr Hinton believes that these feeding flights may take the birds some distance, as he has shot several birds which had their gizzards crammed with wheat grains, possibly obtained on stubble fields. I feel that this is the most likely explanation of the finding of cereal grains in these birds; though it is conceivable that these might have been obtained from grain spilt at riverside warehouses. On August 12, 1947, I saw evening flighting of Mallards from the Walthamstow reservoirs. I have been reliably informed by one of the local gunners that morning and evening flights at Walthamstow regularly occur.

*Gullet and stomach contents:*

*Grit:* found in all but two of the gizzards.

*Vegetable matter:*

*Algae:* *Vaucheria* was found in two stomachs.

*Bryophyta* (Mosses): *Hypnum riparium* found in one stomach.

*Grasses:* roots, fruits and leaves were found in four stomachs.

Complete identification was possible only for the contents of one bird, in which several pieces of Couch grass (*Triticum repens*) were found.

*Other higher plants:* clover leaves (*Trifolium* sp.) were found in two stomachs, a cherry stone (*Prunus cerasus*) in two, hawthorn fruits or stones (*Crataegus Oxyacantha*) in three, and remains of an apple (*Pyrus Malus*) in one.

*Bread:* found in seven stomachs.

*Unidentifiable vegetable debris:* found in 28 stomachs.

*Animal matter:*

*Isopoda*: *Asellus aquaticus* was found in one stomach.

*Coleoptera*: A water boatman (*Notonecta*) in one stomach.

*Diptera*: Two specimens of crane flies (*Tipula* sp.) in one, and a larva of *Chironomus* of the *plumosus* type in one.

*Hemiptera*: *Corixa striata* in two stomachs.

*Lepidoptera*: Remains of a caterpillar of a moth of the *Agrotis* type were found in one stomach.

*Mollusca*: small species only; *Hydrobia ulvae* was the main constituent of two stomach contents; *Potamopyrgus Jenkinsi* was the main content of one.

The results are summarised in the following table, which gives data from birds killed during summer (May to September) separately from those obtained in winter (October to April).

		Numbers of stomachs containing											
		(a) Vegetable matter						(b) Animal matter					
Number of stomachs examined													
		Algae	Bryophyta	Grasses	Other higher plants	Bread	Unidentifiable Débris	Isopoda	Coleoptera	Diptera	Hemiptera	Lepidoptera	Mollusca
Summer	25	—	—	1	6	5	11	—	1	1	—	—	2
Winter	23	2	1	3	2	2	17	1	—	1	2	1	1
Total	48	2	1	4	8	7	28	1	1	2	2	1	3

The birds examined in this series were almost all shot early in the morning, before the arrival of the visitors, who feed bread to them. Gizzards and stomachs collected later in the day would presumably show a much larger proportion of bread. Besides bread, other unnatural foods are apple and cherry, which must have been brought by visitors.

The general predominance of vegetable over animal food already known from published reports of gullets and stomachs in this species (see the references) thus applies to the London park birds as well. Bread obviously replaces much of the vegetable material obtained by wilder birds.

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## The Effects of the Cold Spell of Early 1947 on Birds in the London Area.

By C. B. ASHBY.

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THE prolonged spell of cold weather in the early months of 1947 was among the most severe in living memory and was the sixth notably hard winter to be experienced in the last decade. A period of intense cold occurred in December 1938, and was followed in the winter of 1939-40 by a cold spell which exceeded in severity the cold winter of 1929 and was almost as disastrous as the infamous winter of 1916-17 (4). The hard winters of 1940-41, 1941-42 and the cold spell of January 1945 were less extreme and their effects on bird life correspondingly less striking.

The cold spell of early 1947 started with a snowfall on January 22 and low temperatures persisted until March 8. Meteorological data taken at Chingford during this time (7) show that from the night of January 24 to the afternoon of January 31, and again from February 11-23, the air temperature only occasionally rose above freezing point, and night temperatures were consistently below. On the night of March 2/3 air temperature fell to a minimum of 19° and the unusually low night minima of 12° or 13° on January 28/29, 29/30, February 23/24 and 24/25, must have left only the largest of the London reservoirs open. Easterly winds persisted from January 20 to February 23, once reaching gale force. Repeated snowfalls during the last week of January and early February remained settled to the depth of several inches, and after a partial thaw on February 9 the ground again became hard frozen. The London Area escaped the very heavy snow which beset the North and Midlands, but falls at the end of February and the blizzards which immediately preceded the thaw in early March covered not only the ground but trees and bushes. A glazed frost from March 5/7, occurring at the very end of the cold spell, when many birds were probably at the end of their tether, coated even the smallest twigs with ice. Doubtless some of the more sheltered sides of trunks and branches remained uncovered but the general effect of the glazed frost must have been extremely serious.

The restriction of food supplies of many species caused by severe weather of this order very probably results in a high mortality, yet comparatively few birds are found dead. Other evidence is provided by reports of birds very weak and tame, and by later reductions observed (or suspected) in breeding populations. Mortality lists from Bushy Park and Oxshott each record Crows, Great and Blue Tits, Song-Thrushes, Blackbirds and Green Woodpeckers. Another dead Green Woodpecker was found at Enfield and on March 2, a few days before the glazed frost, a moribund Great Spotted Woodpecker was picked up from the base of a tree at Walthamstow. Redwings and Fieldfares were unusually approachable and some were obviously feeble and dis-

tressed by the cold, but only a few dead ones were reported except from Beddington S.F. Here, concentrations of over 2000 Fieldfares in early February declined as the month progressed and many were found dead (e.g., 21 along five yards of bank). Four Herons were found dead at Mill Hill, and at King George V Reservoir four Velvet-Scoters (a very rare species in London), one Red-necked Grebe and a Black-throated Diver succumbed during February.

A paucity of small birds was noticed in Richmond Park and on several of the Kent and Surrey commons. This was checked by transect censuses at Bookham and may well have been true of many other open parts of the Area. There was a tendency for some species to resort more freely to gardens and into the built-up parts of London, but this was not particularly marked. A Hedge-Sparrow in Onslow Square on March 5 and a Wren in Onslow Gardens on January 31 were unusual visitors. The quest for food brought a Sky-Lark to a seed-hopper in a St John's Wood garden and a flock of 42 to a rubbish dump near the Brent Reservoir. Fieldfares and Redwings appeared in ones and twos in suburban roads and gardens and, with Sky-Larks, were noted feeding on the mud verge of the Thames at various places between Chelsea and Richmond. A. C. G. Poore, after watching from a hide, reported that both Redwings and Fieldfares at Beddington S.F. defended individual feeding territories on the frozen fields and were more aggressive on the colder days. A Mistle-Thrush at Beddington was seen pecking deliberately at a dead Fieldfare; another, at Mill Hill in February, fed on *Cotoneaster horizontalis* and perched on a roof, drinking snow as it thawed and dripped.

Finches and buntings formed large flocks near strawstacks. At one stack on Walton Heath a mixed flock present at the end of January and early February consisted of 300/500 Chaffinches, c. 30 Bramblings, at least 100 Greenfinches, a similar number of House-Sparrows and Yellow Buntings, about six each Tree-Sparrows and Reed-Buntings, and a single cock Cirl Bunting. On another occasion 86 Bramblings were seen, and at cornstacks near Tadworth a flock of 300 Greenfinches was recorded. A flock of c. 30 Reed-Buntings on Esher Common and c. 50 Linnets at Wandsworth Park fed actively on grass heads protruding from the snow, while thistle heads standing clear of the snow in Bushy Park provided food for a flock of c. 12 Goldfinches. At Oxshott on February 16 a flock of c. 12 Long-tailed Tits were seen feeding off the surface of the snow. Species such as Blackbirds, Wood-Pigeons and perhaps Great Tits, which normally have the habit of scratching among and turning over leaves, possibly suffered less than others since they were seen to apply this habit to scratching away snow.

Unusual movements and concentrations of Sky-Larks, which were so prominent a feature of previous cold spells, occurred again but on not nearly so large a scale. The largest flocks were c. 400 at Fetcham Downs and a similar number at Mill Hill, where they remained spread over three snow-covered fields from February 7-25; but most of these had gone by the 27th after a partial thaw. In 1938 Sky-Larks appeared

in the squares and streets of London and in the Central Parks (2). This time there were few such records, and where in 1938 many thousands were noted flying over London, in 1947 much smaller flocks passed over town and suburbs. For example, 15/20 flew N.E. over Onslow Square on March 5, and the next day c. 50 were seen heading in the same direction. Seven flew N. over Lord's Cricket Ground on March 6, but southerly movements were recorded over Green Park (60 on January 29), Edgware (40/50 on February 2), and Battersea Park (20/30 on February 6). Up to eight were noted from January 28 to March 8 in Kensington Gardens.

There were few records of observed movements of Fieldfares and Redwings, certainly nothing to compare with the flights of big flocks of Redwings over London witnessed in December 1938. A flock of Fieldfares passed over Friends' House, Euston, on January 31 and 40/50 were feeding on hawthorns in Kensington Gardens on February 5. Single birds were seen there in March and in St James's Park on February 7. Up to five Redwings were present in Kensington Gardens from early January to March 25. Fieldfares and Redwings resort every winter to Beddington S.F., where flocks of a hundred or more are not uncommon. During cold weather in early 1936 flocks of 500/600 Redwings were noted but the early 1947 flocks at Beddington were very much larger, increasing to c. 400 on February 2 and c. 2000 on February 8. Numbers of Fieldfares showed a similar trend; c. 400 were seen on February 2 and the flock cautiously estimated at 2500 on February 6. During the week ending February 25 the numbers showed a 60% decrease and many died.

It seems probable that a Bittern flushed from behind a laurel bush in the grounds of St Mary's College, Twickenham, on March 21 and one found in a suburban garden at Carshalton on March 18 were frozen out of their more usual haunts. Another was seen at Beddington Corner on February 1 and one at Ruxley G.P. on March 2.

The incidence of surface freezing of the many ponds and reservoirs in the London Area is not recorded in detail in the reports received, but by inference it is probable that all the smaller waters were continuously frozen from the end of January to the middle of March. Bigger waters, such as the reservoirs, froze during February but there often remained patches of open water, depending on the varying severity of the weather. Even the large reservoirs at Staines and Littleton were partly frozen over in February and almost completely in early March. Walton Reservoir and the rivers were the only waters to remain unfrozen throughout. The effect on the duck populations was either to drive them out of the area or shift them to waters remaining unfrozen.

Of the 15 species of duck present on the Thames between Chelsea and Richmond no increase was noted in Sheld-Duck, Gadwall, or Shoveler. The occurrence of two Mergansers and a Long-tailed Duck cannot be directly attributed to the cold spell, but Mallard flocks of 50/100 and even c. 300 were much larger than previous winter numbers

on the river. Teal occurred on the river in former hard winters (e.g., 21 in December 1941), but numbers in 1947 rose to 150 at Kew on March 9. Wigeon—up to 20 in past winters—rose to 30 on February 23 and 80 on February 26. Pintail are usually on the river only in ones and twos in winter, and in other cold spells there has been no increase; but in 1947 there was a flock of 15 on March 9 at Kew.

Diving ducks resorted to the Thames in greater strength than ever before recorded. A flock of c. 1000 Pochard occurred at Wandsworth at the end of February and about half were still present on March 9. Flocks of 80 and 30 were seen at Chiswick and Chelsea, often with Tufted Duck. Tufteds were numerous on the river from about February 17 onwards, the largest flocks being 200/300 at Kew, and c. 200 each at Chiswick and Wandsworth. In mid-February a flock of c. 1500 Tufted Ducks and Pochard, the former predominating, were oscillating between an open patch on Barn Elms and the Thames at Chiswick. In the cold spell of 1938 the reservoirs did not freeze and ducks were not driven to the river; in 1939-40 and subsequent cold winters flocks of up to 200 each of Pochard and Tufted Ducks were on the Thames. A flock of 800 Tufted Ducks was seen at Chelsea in February 1942 and, rather surprisingly, 175 Pochard at Hammersmith on November 22 of the same year, when the weather was not particularly cold. Scaup have appeared in ones and twos on the river in past winters, and seven were at Chiswick Eyot in the cold February of 1942; but in 1947 parties up to 17 were recorded at Kew and Chiswick and 18 at Wandsworth on March 1. Goldeneye were present at Hammersmith, Kew and Chertsey; over 20 drakes were seen on February 23, compared with a maximum of five in other years.

In contrast, the 1947 Goosander figures on the Thames do not represent an influx so much as normal cold weather habits. The flocks which occurred were mainly at Kew, with a maximum of 29 on March 13. Slightly larger flocks (up to 40) were noted in 1939-40, 1941-42 and 1943-44. Similarly Smew, though perhaps more numerous than in milder winters, were not in unusual numbers. The largest party was one of 18 at Kew, compared with 37 at Chiswick in February 1940 and 14 there in February 1942.

Apart from the Thames, the chief haunts of Pochard and Tufted Duck in the Area were Barn Elms and Walton Reservoirs. Even before the onset of the cold there were c. 1000 each Pochard and Tufted at Barn Elms, though numbers of each at Walton were less than 150. With the freezing of smaller waters there was no increase at Barn Elms although the flocks remained large during early February until the reservoirs froze. But at Walton numbers of each had risen to over 1000 by February 1 and the combined flocks could be estimated in thousands right through the severe weather. On March 8 the flock was put at 2000/3000; on the 9th, Pochard and Tufted Duck were seen leaving the Kew-Richmond area to the total number of at least a thousand and flying in the general direction of Walton, where the flock on the reservoir that day was estimated at 3000/4000. On March

1 and 2, when the flocks were so large that counting was out of the question, P. W. E. Currie and W. J. L. Sladen estimated 5000/6000, of which over half were Tufted. Numbers such as these are altogether exceptional, the previous maxima being 1400/1500 Tufted Duck at Barn Elms in January 1939, and 1160 Pochard at the same reservoirs on December 24, 1946, at the end of a week-long cold snap.

Walton Reservoir was the resort also of many Goosander, numbers rising from 15/20 during early February to c. 550 on February 28, 397 on March 1 and 516 on March 8. Owing to a gap in the records it is not possible to say definitely whether this flock and that of c. 600 seen at Queen Mary Reservoir in the first half of February were the same, but this supposition seems reasonable. These exceptional numbers (the highest on record for the London Area) must have been due to an influx from outside; the Goosander from other waters in the Area could not have made up such a total. Numbers at Barn Elms and Island Barn Reservoirs declined from 80 and 66 respectively to none as the reservoirs froze, and at Staines the flock never exceeded 20 birds. Flocks of 100 or over have been recorded 11 times since 1937, notably at Staines and Molesey. The larger numbers have sometimes been associated with very cold weather, but not invariably. A flock of 320 seen on February 2, 1945, at the end of a cold snap is the second largest for the Area.

Smew reacted differently. The largest flocks before the onset of the cold spell were c. 80 at Barn Elms and c. 90 at Walthamstow Reservoirs. The dispersal of these flocks as the weather became more severe is not reflected by increases elsewhere. There were no significant increases on the Thames or at Walton at this time, and numbers at Lonsdale Road Reservoirs, Staines, and the Brent Reservoir never rose above 30. It is therefore probable that the original flocks left the Area, but an influx occurred later at Walton when numbers rose from c. 20 on February 25/28 to 89 on March 1. Flocks of 60/80 are not uncommon in the London Area and 117 were recorded during the 1938 cold spell.

Less complete records are available for other ducks but an unusually large flock of c. 200 Wigeon at Staines on December 26, 1946, was estimated at c. 300 on January 2, 120 on January 23 and 103 on January 28. On February 4 there was none, although the reservoir was not frozen. Pintail on Walton Reservoir increased from four on March 1 to 26 a week later. A not exceptionally large flock of c. 100 Shoveler at Staines on January 2 had reduced to 60/70 by January 23, and not more than 14 were present in the cold weather. Very few were seen on other waters and evidently comparatively few remained in the Area during the cold spell; but whether this may be attributed to the cold is uncertain as the species is normally given to considerable fluctuation.

Of the waders, Curlew and Dunlin are chiefly known as passage migrants in the London Area and occur in winter only in times of severe weather. In early 1947 Dunlin were recorded only from Beddington S.F., where six were seen during most of February, but Curlews were

noted in ten localities. Widespread records of Woodcock reveal that the species was not driven from the Area by the severity of the winter and tracks in the snow at Bookham, Esher and Ripley Commons suggested they had been present in some numbers. Three appeared in suburban gardens at Morden. A few Jack Snipe remained and Common Snipe were concentrated at Beddington S.F., where exceptionally large numbers (maximum 200 on February 1) were seen throughout the severe weather. A Green Sandpiper at Kempton Reservoir from January 25 onwards withstood the arctic conditions by feeding along the edge of the half-frozen reservoir and later, when it froze over completely, by resorting to a nearby ditch which remained open and running all winter.

An examination of the after-effects of the cold spell on distribution, fertility and breeding populations is perhaps most profitable when the country is regarded as a whole, more particularly as conclusions of this nature—when not backed by the evidence of comparative figures—must rest on the opinions of observers. Relevant extracts from the records of the Society were forwarded to the Editor of *British Birds* to assist in the compilation of the report foreshadowed in *British Birds*, Vol. XL, p. 377. Census figures are, however, available for Herons and Great Crested Grebes in the London Area and these show a reduction. In 1946 there were 142 pairs of nesting Herons, but in 1947 there were 126 pairs; Great Crested Grebes declined from 271 total adults in 1946 to 220 adults in 1947.

A list of observers from whose notes this report is compiled would be almost a reproduction of that on pp. 1 and 2. In gratefully acknowledging these records special mention must be made of H. F. Greenfield and W. G. Teagle for help with extracting; and of P. W. E. Currie for his detailed notes for parts of Surrey.

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## Bird Ringing in 1947.

**I** NTEREST in the bird ringing activities of the Ornithological Section has been maintained and 509 birds of 55 species were ringed, as compared with 467 of 68 species in 1946. Species ringed included Cirl-Bunting, Nuthatch, Red-backed Shrike, Ring-Ouzel, Black Redstart, Dipper, Nightjar, Storm-Petrel, Woodcock, Stone-Curlew, and the Long-tailed Duck in St James's Park (see p. 19). In addition, completed schedules for 228 birds ringed for the Society in 1939 by G. R. Mountfort were received.

The following is an analysis of the returns of the twenty ringers taking part:—

<i>Name of Ringer</i>	<i>Nestlings</i>	<i>Trapped</i>	<i>Total</i>
H. E. Andrews ... ..	4	5	9
M. J. Ardley ... ..	75	21	96
C. B. Ashby ... ..	19	7	26
J. A. Bailey ... ..	—	3	3
T. L. Bartlett ... ..	4	75	79
G. Beven ... ..	7	—	7
F. C. Bromley ... ..	7	—	7
P. W. E. Currie ... ..	25	14	39
R. S. R. Fitter ... ..	9	20	29
E. O. Höhn ... ..	11	4	15
R. C. Homes ... ..	9	4	13
E. R. Parrinder ... ..	3	—	3
P. E. Parry ... ..	2	1	3
B. A. Richards ... ..	48	11	59
A. H. V. Smith ... ..	10	—	10
W. G. Teagle ... ..	18	2	20
A. G. G. Thompson ... ..	—	5	5
C. N. Walter ... ..	—	49	49
C. A. White ... ..	5	2	7
J. A. Wigzell ... ..	7	23	30
<hr/>			
Total, 1947 ... ..	263	246	509
Total, 1946 ... ..	340	127	467

Members who have not yet taken up bird ringing are invited to communicate with the Bird Ringing Secretary, B. A. Richards, 29b St John's Avenue, S.W.15, from whom rings may be obtained at 1/10 per packet of 20. Rings used are those issued by the British Trust for Ornithology.

B. A. R.

## Bird-Feeding in Gardens Enquiry.

**T** HIS enquiry was started at the beginning of 1948, and observers with bird-tables in their gardens are invited to co-operate. Its purpose is the collection and analysis of data relating to the more common birds, exact knowledge of whose distribution and habits is often meagre. Copies of the schedule listing the type of information required and how we would like it presented may be obtained from Mrs E. D. Parrinder, 27 Gwalior House, Chase Road, N.14.

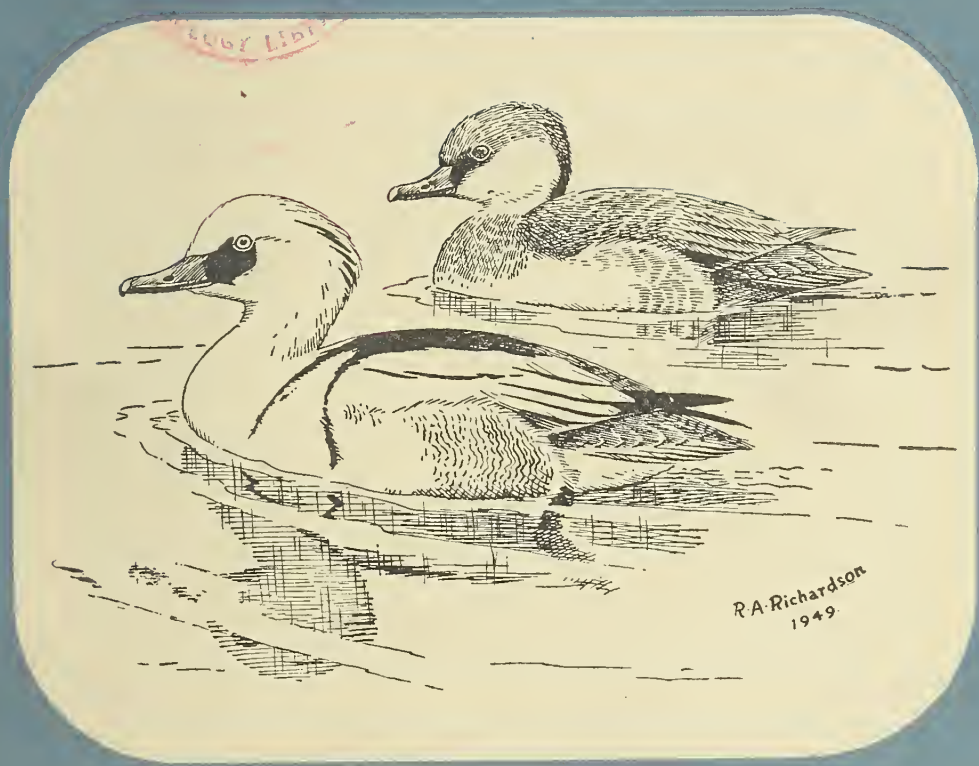




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# THE LONDON BIRD REPORT

— No. 13 —



Published November 1949 by

THE LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

NUMBER THIRTEEN · 1948 · PRICE: TWO SHILLINGS & SIXPENCE

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THE drawing on the cover by R. A. Richardson is of a male and female Snew. This strikingly plumaged duck is regularly seen on the London reservoirs in winter.

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## THE LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Founded in 1858

INDOOR MEETINGS are held at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street, W.C.1, and the Hall of the Art-Workers' Guild, 6 Queen Square, W.C.1.

FIELD MEETINGS are held at most week-ends and occasionally, in summer, on mid-week evenings.

PUBLICATIONS. All Members and Associates receive free copies of the *London Bird Report* and the *London Naturalist*, published annually. (A limited quantity of the *London Bird Report* for 1947 is still available, price 2/6 (1/8 to members), on application to the General Secretary.)

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### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS.

<i>Members</i>	17/6 (10/- if under 21 years of age).
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Full particulars of membership will gladly be given by the General Secretary  
—H. A. Toombs, British Museum (Nat. Hist.), Cromwell Road, S.W.7.





BLACK REDSTART (p. 33).

Feeding nestlings, Westminster School, 1948.

*Photo* : L. H. Burd. A.R.P.S.

# The London Bird Report 1948

Edited by  
C. B. Ashby, M.B.O.U.

Assisted by the Records Committee of the Ornithological Section:

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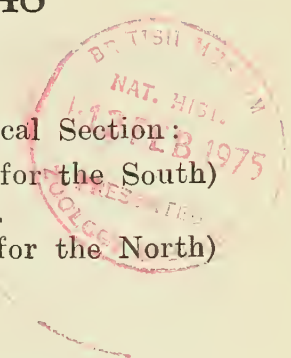
## Introduction

THE LONDON BIRD REPORT carries on from year to year a current history of the wild bird population of London, the suburbs, and the fringe of open country still left within a circle of twenty miles radius from St. Paul's Cathedral. It may even surprise some by the remarkable wealth of bird life it reveals in so overrun and highly-developed an area. But the listing of rarities is by no means its chief function; it is equally concerned with the distribution and status of many commoner species and with the results of special enquiries undertaken by teams of observers.

As a result of the year's recording we again know almost exactly the breeding population in the London Area of the Black Redstart, Heron, Great Crested Grebe and Little Ringed Plover, and with a fair degree of certainty the nesting distribution and strength of the Wood-Lark, Red-backed Shrike, Reed-Warbler, Whinchat, Redstart and Wryneck. Further information on the status of many other breeding species has been obtained, and although in many cases details are not now published they will be of value in the preparation of the Society's forthcoming book on the birds of the London Area from 1900 to 1950.

The breeding of Shoveler this year at Perry Oaks is the first nesting record for the London Area and for Middlesex, and Garganey were noted during the nesting season at Rainham and in the Perry Oaks-Staines district. The occurrence of both these species in spring and summer at likely breeding places in the London Area has been recorded before, and we appeal to observers to keep a careful watch for evidence of breeding in future. A Slavonian Grebe in full breeding plumage spent the summer near Staines, and although no mate appeared it made some attempts at nest-building. Black-headed Gulls nested again at Perry Oaks, where the continued success of the comparatively recent colony of about 300 pairs is most interesting, especially as it is one of the very few inland colonies in the south of England.

The autumn was notable for the many records of waders, particularly from the area between Heathrow and Staines. This increase is partly the result of more observers finding this district well worth visiting regularly, but it is evident that larger numbers of migrating waders than usual were attracted by the very suitable condition of the feeding and resting grounds in this corner of Middlesex. One favoured locality was the sewage farm at Perry Oaks, although at first the letting of the shooting rights there threatened to cause much disturbance. Fortunately, it was agreed that shooting would be withheld until the end



of November, and we are most grateful to our member Sir Cyril Hurcomb, and to the Middlesex County Council, for their part in this.

Another especially attractive site was the large new reservoir at Staines, known as the King George VI Reservoir. This was filled in November 1947, but during the summer of 1948 was almost emptied and remained for the rest of the year as a large area of undulating gravel containing numerous pools, some with muddy or sandy strands and margins.

From July to October, and even into November, there was a varying procession of Turnstones, Curlew-Sandpipers, Little Stints, Sanderlings, Ruffs, Common, Wood- and Green Sandpipers, and Greenshanks; with Dunlins in flocks up to seventy and Ringed Plovers almost as numerous. Occasionally there were Black-tailed Godwits, Knots, Grey Plovers, Oystercatchers; and once a Phalarope swimming on a shallow pool.

During the colder months the reservoirs were again the resort of many kinds of wildfowl, and in the early part of the year the numbers of Pochard were quite exceptional. The yearly fluctuations in London's duck populations are the subject of a paper on pages 46 to 56, based both on our annual records and on the series of wildfowl censuses taken in recent years. On October 30th Velvet Scoters were seen on the reservoirs at Walthamstow, Brent and Walton; as many as twenty were found at Staines. We cannot assume that the influx occurred on this date, as arrivals during the week would probably have escaped notice until the 30th, a Saturday; but it is clear that the presence of these birds was the result of a distinct inland movement about that time.

October also brought seven Razorbills to the Thames below the Houses of Parliament, and on the same day, October 5th, four were reported from Walthamstow and a probable one from Hammersmith. The following day, and until the 18th, visitors to Kensington Gardens had the unusual pleasure of seeing one swimming on the Round Pond or standing on the bank, looking out of place among the familiar birds of the London parks. Another sea-going bird seen during the year was the Gannet which made news in the daily press when it was caught in a cornfield at Hayes on August 6th. Londoners had first-hand evidence of the harm done by floating oil at sea in the appearance of four or five oiled Black-throated and Red-throated Divers, which sought the sanctuary of the lakes and reservoirs to die. Black-necked Grebes were again present from April to December, as many as fourteen being seen at Staines in August and thirteen in September.

A Buzzard circling low over Big Ben early in January was only one of the interesting birds of prey reported in 1948. There was a Long-eared Owl near Perry Oaks in January and a Short-eared Owl in Epping Forest in February; Peregrines were seen in Inner London and at Eynsford and Staines; Merlins at Staines and Banstead; but most remarkable of all was a Kite, perhaps the first for a century or two, seen high above the ancient trees of Epping Forest, recalling the

days when Kites scavenged in the streets of London and bred freely in the surrounding woods.

The *Report* includes notes and papers resulting from a number of organised special enquiries. These are being carried through by a refreshingly large proportion of the membership and are producing results quite out of reach of observers working in smaller units or alone. The series of duck censuses was started as an independent L.N.H.S. venture and now has been combined with the much wider census developed by the International Wildfowl Inquiry. Teams of members have, since the beginning of 1948, intensively studied the bird communities at four of London's gravel pits. At the time of writing (mid-1949) original work is in progress on the numbers and distribution of Swifts, Swallows and House-Martins, and on the problems connected with the hordes of Starlings which roost in London. The precise information on Black Redstarts, Herons and Great Crested Grebes already mentioned is also the result of organised endeavour, undertaken annually in conjunction with the British Trust for Ornithology. The Section regularly carries out large-scale ringing activities using B.T.O. rings, and we publish in the systematic part of the *Report* the more important recoveries notified during the year.

Our new cover this year is the work of R. A. Richardson and Leslie Baker, to both of whom we accord our grateful thanks. We further appreciate Mr Baker's kind assistance in the preparation of the blocks and in the improved typography of the systematic section. For our photographic illustrations we are indebted to L. H. Burd, R. C. Homes and C. W. G. Paulson.

Our thanks are offered also to the following 213 observers and especially to Mrs H. M. Ashby, J. A. Bailey, J. S. S. Beesley, J. F. Burton, L. R. Evans, Mrs R. C. Homes, F. J. L. Mitchell, Mr and Mrs D. A. T. Morgan and D. C. Pegram for help with the entering and checking, and for assistance in many other ways.

### List of Observers

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| C. B. Ashby.                     | H. A. Bilby.                      | J. Claiden (per J.W.L.).        |
| Mrs H. M. Ashby.                 | H. Bishop (H.Bp.,<br>per G.E.M.). | C. S. M. Cohen.                 |
| R. S. Ashley.                    | T. Bispham.                       | C. L. Collenette.               |
| H., G. Attlee (per C.B.A.).      | J. H. Boswall<br>(per C.B.A.).    | Mrs C. L. Collenette.           |
| S. Austin.                       | M. O. Boyd (per E.R.P.).          | S. Cramp.                       |
| J. A. Bailey.                    | Mrs W. I. Brewer.                 | H. A. Craw.                     |
| L. Baker.                        | Miss B. E. Brown.                 | J. M. Cullen.                   |
| Miss E. R. Ballance.             | Mrs R. S. Brown.                  | R. da Cunha.                    |
| A. W. Bartlett.                  | Mrs S. Bull<br>(per J. Fisher).   | P. W. E. Currie.                |
| T. L. Bartlett.                  |                                   | Miss M. Curtis.                 |
| Dr H. A. Baylis<br>(per C.B.A.). |                                   | J. E. S. Dallas.                |
|                                  |                                   | Mrs R. F. Dallas.               |

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 F. Dutton (per R.S.R.F.)  
 K. V. Elphinstone.  
 M. D. England.  
 A. E. English.  
 L. R. Evans.  
 W. H. Feakes (per C.B.A.).  
 Mrs E. M. Ferguson  
 (per R.S.R.F.).  
 F. M. Firth.  
 James Fisher.  
 R. S. R. Fitter.  
 D. V. Freshwater.  
 W. A. L. Friedlein.  
 V. R. Garrett.  
 T. Gascoigne.  
 W. E. Gaze.  
 E. H. Gillham.  
 D. Goodwin.  
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 Miss N. Goom.  
 Capt. C. H. B. Grant.  
 H. F. Greenfield.  
 J. Gunn (per V.R.G.).  
 T. Guthrie (per E.McE.).  
 D. G. Hall.  
 C. J. O. Harrison.  
 J. Harrison.  
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 R. S. Hatch.  
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 R. W. Hayman (R.W.Hn.).  
 S. D. Herington  
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 C. O. Heron (per C.H.F.P.).  
 Mrs S. V. Hillier.  
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 R. B. Holroyde.  
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 K. E. Hoy.  
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 E. N. Hunter.  
 Sir Cyril Hurcomb.  
 E. S. Hurrell  
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 Miss L. J. Johns.  
 A. E. Jolley.  
 H. O. Jones.  
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 S. Keon.  
 Mrs H. M. Rait-Kerr.  
 H. Keywood.  
 K. P. Keywood.  
 E. R. G. Kidd.
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 P. R. Knipe.  
 D. Koster.  
 Dr J. W. Landells.  
 D. Lea (per R.S.R.F.).  
 Miss E. P. Leach  
 (per H.M.R.K.).  
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 J. H. Lockett.  
 Miss C. E. Longfield.  
 Dr G. Carmichael Löw.  
 Mrs E. MacAlister.  
 Miss E. McEwen.  
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 (per K.P.).  
 E. C. Ormerod.  
 R. Osborn (per G.E.M.).  
 D. F. Owen.  
 E. R. Parrinder.  
 Mrs E. D. Parrinder.  
 C. H. F. Parsons.  
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 D. C. Pegram.  
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- A. W. Rathbone  
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 T. A. Rumbold.  
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 R. H. M. Ryall.  
 B. L. Sage.  
 R. E. Sharland.  
 W. S. Shipp (per W.D.M.).  
 P. E. L. Simmonds.  
 S. H. Singleton.  
 R. L. D. Skeggs.  
 A. V. Smith.  
 K. D. Smith.  
 R. P. Smith (per G.E.M.).  
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 A. Williams.  
 R. Williams (per C.B.A.).  
 W. Wilmot (per V.R.G.).  
 D. N. Wood.  
 Miss H. M. Muir-Wood.  
 L. R. Woolner  
 (per P.W.E.C.).  
 W. A. Wright.  
 P. F. Yeo.



# Birds in the London Area 1948

## A REPORT ON BIRD LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

THE number preceding the name of each species refers to Witherby's *Check-List of British Birds* (1941), where the full scientific name will be found. All records are for 1948 except where otherwise stated. The initials following each record indicate the observer(s) responsible for it. The six counties within the circle of twenty miles radius are indicated by their initials, *viz.*:—B = Bucks.; E = Essex; H = Herts.; K = Kent; M = Middlesex; S = Surrey. Records from the Thames between Richmond and Putney, and from the adjacent Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road Reservoirs, are grouped under T owing to the frequent movements between these reservoirs and the river. The following abbreviations also are used:—*B.B.* = *British Birds* magazine; *G.P.* = Gravel Pit; *L.B.R.* = *London Bird Report*; *Res.* = Reservoir; *S.F.* = Sewage Farm.

### 2 Hooded Crow

- E Walthamstow Res., one on Jan. 10, two on Feb. 4 and one on Mar. 20 (E.T.N., H.W.R., W.A.W.).  
 M Queen Mary Res., one on Nov. 8 (J.A.W.).  
 S Beddington S.F., one from the beginning of the year (*cf. L.B.R.*, 1947, p. 3) until Apr. 17 fed regularly with a flock of Carrion Crows (C.B.A., H.B., C.J.O.H. *et al.*).

### 3 Carrion Crow

- E One ringed as a nestling at Loughton by A.C.W. on 25.v.46 was recovered at Buckhurst Hill (two miles south) on 7.viii.48.

### 4 Rook

- M Inner London, Smithfield Market, three flying south on April 12, calling (C.A.W.). This is the first Inner London record since 1940.  
 K Eynsford, a flock of some 10,000 Rooks and Jackdaws, the Rooks predominating, used Lullingstone Park as an assembly ground on Oct. 31 *et seq.* prior to roosting near Kemsing, just outside the London Area (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.; *cf. R. G. Newton in Proc. Croydon N.H.S.S.*, 1947, p. 213).

### 5 Jackdaw

- M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, at least four pairs bred (E.M.C.E., G.C.L., C.H.F.P.).

### 10/11 Jay

- M Inner London, noted in the Central Parks from January to April and from August to December, but the only definite evidence of breeding was of two pairs in Kensington Gardens (G.C.L., W.G.T.).

*et al.*); in Battersea Park it was regularly seen, and of six-eight noted from June onwards most were birds of the year (E.M.N., R.O.).

### 17 Golden Oriole

H Near Bricket Wood, a male seen and heard singing for c. 20 minutes near Hanstead's House on May 5 was again seen and heard about a mile away on May 7 (E.H.W.). Satisfactory details have been received.

### 18 Hawfinch

Although this species is widely distributed in the London Area at all seasons, and there are April-June records from many localities, evidence of breeding in 1948 is only fragmentary:

- E Ilford, a pair feeding two to four fully-fledged young in Valentine's Park on June 18 (K.D.G.M.).
- M Stanmore, one to two pairs bred in Bentley Priory grounds and two pairs bred on Stanmore Common (J.A.B.).
- K Bred at Bickley and Chislehurst (F.J.H.) and at Longfield (J.S.S.B.). Probably bred at Elmstead Woods (J.F.B.).
- S Wimbledon Common, one pair suspected of breeding (R.W.HN., J.A.W.).

### 19 Greenfinch

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one pair nested (E.MCE.).

### 20 Goldfinch

- M Inner London, Regent's Park, a pair present from March to July, the male singing (S.C., E.H.W.).
- S Inner suburbs, Tooting Bec Common, an adult with four young on the wing on June 22 (H.G.A.).

### 21 Siskin

- E Epping Forest, c. 5 on Jan. 25 (J.A.B.) and 40-50 on Mar. 28 (H.A.C.).
- H Rickmansworth, Stocker's Lake, c. 20 on Dec. 5 (J.A.B.).
- M Winter flocks of up to c. 50 in all usual localities (*cf.* L.B.R., 1947, p. 4).
- K River Darent valley, 40-50 in alders between Horton Kirby and Farningham on Feb. 29; 25-30 in alders at Shoreham on Feb. 1 and c. 20 on Oct. 31 (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.).
- S Leatherhead, seven in alders by the River Mole on Feb. 18 (J.E.S.D.). Richmond Park, six on Oct. 30 and 31 (R.W.HN., D.A.R.). Weybridge, c. 28 on Dec. 19 (B.A.R.). Wisley, c. 50 on Jan. 3 and 15-20 on Apr. 10 (J.H.L.).

### 25 Lesser Redpoll

Non-breeding season records from many places in all counties, as usual, except from the very small part of Bucks. within the Society's Area; mainly in small parties and flocks up to 20, but c. 200 were seen by D.F.O. at Darenth Wood, Kent, on Dec. 27

M Stanmore, several frequented large gardens throughout the breeding season and often sang (J.A.B.); fledgelings were seen being fed in a large garden on June 10 (E.H.W.). Hampstead Garden Suburb, two immatures in a large garden on Aug. 1 (E.H.W.). Inner London, Kensington, c. 8 in Cornwall Gardens on Feb. 1 (C.H.B.G.).

S Bred at South Croydon (one pair, F.M.F.) and at Cobham (one pair, J.S.R.). Merton Park, one or two pairs present until late June (B.A.R.). Tadworth and Banstead Heath, five pairs in the breeding season (H.B.). Wandsworth Common, a family party on June 21 and Sept. 16 (H.G.A.).

### 28/29 Twite

M Staines Moor, two on Sept. 29; the distinctive call was heard several times and the rump of one bird was plainly seen to be rosy (R.H.M.R.).

### 33 Bullfinch

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one on July 14, 20 and Aug. 21 (E.MCE., J.MCH.).

### 40/41 Chaffinch

M Inner London, a pronounced north-westerly migration was noticed through Green Park, St James's Park and Kensington Gardens between Oct. 6 and Nov. 3. Counts of birds in flight between 8.15 and 8.40 a.m. or 8.00 and 8.30 a.m. B.S.T. resulted in 61 on Oct. 6, 525 on Oct. 15, c. 330 on Oct. 20, 31 on Oct. 21 and 164 on Nov. 3, the birds passing through in small parties or in flocks up to 70. Some migrating parties alighted in Green Park for varying periods before departing northwards (W.G.T.).

### 42 Brambling

H Elstree, one on Oct. 30 (E.H.W.).

M Mill Hill, one on Jan. 5 (E.H.W.) and one on Feb. 29 (W.D.M.). Stanmore Common, two on Apr. 10 (J.A.B.).

K Ruxley G.P., c. 50 with a flock of c. 450 Chaffinches on Feb. 22 (J.F.B.), and three on Mar. 6 (F.J.H.). Southfleet, one on Feb. 22 (J.S.S.B.). Eynsford, two on Oct. 31 (G.E.M.).

S Botley Hill, one on Mar. 7 (H.F.G.). Lower Kingswood, one on Jan. 30 (H.B.). Wimbledon Common, one on Jan. 8 (K.V.E.) and one on Mar. 26 (H.A.C.). Tadworth, one or two between Oct. 19 and Nov. 14 (H.B.).

### 43 Corn-Bunting

M Recorded at all seasons from the area formed by Feltham, Heathrow, Poyle, Stanwell, Staines Moor and Reservoirs. Harefield, one singing on July 10 (R.S.H.).

K Longfield, one pair nested (J.S.S.B., W.I.B.). Noted in the breeding season at Abbey Wood Marshes (J.F.B.), Stone Marshes (W.I.B.) and Eynsford (J.F.B., D.F.O.).

S Beddington S.F., one on May 3 (J.A.W.).

**59 Snow-Bunting**

M King George VI Res., a female or first winter male was clearly seen on Dec. 18 and the plumage described (J.A.W.). This is the first record for the London Area since 1936.

**61 House-Sparrow**

M Inner London, St James's Park, counts made in November and December between 8.30 and 8.55 a.m. G.M.T. show a population of c. 300 birds (w.g.t.). Mill Hill, a juvenile not half-fledged was found dead on December 8, having fallen from a nest in the roof of a house (E.H.W.). The *Handbook* states ". . . fresh eggs may be found . . . exceptionally in almost every month."

**62 Tree-Sparrow**

- E Nested as usual at Sewardstone (P.F.C.R.) and seen in the breeding season at Chingford (E.MCE.).
- H Noted in the breeding season at Hertingfordbury and at Colney Street, Moor Mill and Old Parkbury (E.H.W.).
- M Nested at Ashford (E.W.P.) and Staines Moor (K.V.E., C.A.W.). The old-established colonies at Brockley Hill and Mill Hill continue (E.H.W.).
- S Nested at Beddington S.F. (three pairs, s.H.C., C.J.O.H.), Richmond Park (C.L.C.) and Walton-on-Thames (K.P.K.).

**69 Wood-Lark**

- E Chingford, on and near Pole Hill, one singing between Mar. 7 and 13 (E.T.N.), on July 2 (W.A.W.) and on Aug. 15 (H.W.R.). South Weald, two feeding together in Weald Park on Sept. 30 were joined by a male which had been singing, and a second singing male was located in another part of the park (R.B.W.). Warley, one singing on two dates in April (P.F.C.R.).
- H North Mimms, one singing on Mar. 7 (P.E.L.S.).
- M Stanmore, three, of which two were males, were seen on Apr. 10, and two nests with young were found during the season (J.A.B.). Staines Moor, one in flight, calling, on July 25 (J.A.B.).
- S Headley, a presumed pair on Mar. 27 and one adult with two juveniles in the same locality on June 17 (s.H.C.). Richmond Park, four young birds seen on July 11 had evidently only recently left the nest (A.F.K.). Wimbledon Common, two pairs nested, one successfully rearing three young (E.S., P.S.). A pair nested in a North East Surrey locality and reared four young (H.E.P.).

**81 Rock-Pipit**

S Barn Elms Res., three on Oct. 5 (G.C.L.) and one on Oct. 10 (D.A.T.M., K.T.M.).

**Variant Yellow Wagtails**

- M** A cock resembling a typical Blue-headed Wagtail (*M. f. flava*) was seen on seven occasions on Staines Moor between Apr. 17 and May 25, and on May 24 and 25 was consorting with a hen *m. flava* sp. as though paired. A similar cock was seen on Staines Reservoir on Apr. 18. A paler-headed cock approaching the so-called Sykes' mutant (resembling *M. f. beema*) was also present on Staines Moor from May 7-30; on May 7 it was associating with a hen *M. flava* sp. which was nest building, and on May 18 was again seen with a hen and defended a territory against birds of the British form, *flavissima*. A similar pale-headed cock was noted at the adjacent King George VI Reservoir on May 9. (For a modern conception of such sub-specific relationships as these see V. C. Wynne-Edwards, *The Scottish Naturalist*, 60, p. 203; see also *The Handbook*, Supplementary Additions and Corrections, p. 7, *B.B.*, 41, pp. 213-4, 345-6, 42, pp. 86-87, and *L.B.R.*, 1947, p. 7; also *B.B.*, 42, pp. 129-134 et seq.).
- S** Barn Elms Res., a cock resembling a typical *M. f. flava* was seen on Apr. 18 and 22 (G.C.L., R.H.M.R.).

**88 Yellow Wagtail**

All nesting records received are given, but doubtless many other pairs bred.

- E** Bred at Mayesbrook Park G.P. (three pairs, H.E.A.), King George V Res. (W.A.W.) and Sewardstone (P.F.C.R.).
- H** Bred at various places between Elstree and St Albans (E.H.W.) and present during the breeding season at Colney Street and Rickmansworth.
- M** The only definite nesting records are from Bushy Park (one pair, E.W.P.) and Hendon (one pair, E.H.W.), but the species was present in the breeding season at Feltham, Staines Moor and Mill Hill.
- K** Bred at Abbey Wood Marshes (four pairs, J.F.B.), Crayford (one pair, W.I.B.), and Elmers End S.F. (two pairs, G.E.M.).
- S** Bred at Barn Elms Res. (four pairs, R.S.B., G.C.L. *et al.*) and Ham Gravel Pit (two pairs, F.R.M.). Mitcham Common, two pairs seen carrying food during July into ploughed area growing potatoes (C.J.O.H.).

**89 Grey Wagtail**

- M** Inner London, non-breeding records of up to three from the built-up areas as well as the parks, disused static water tanks being particularly attractive.
- S** Epsom S.F., a pair seen in the breeding season, and on Sept. 3 two adults accompanied by two juveniles; on Sept. 17 a flock of 18 (H.B., L.I.C.). Godstone, a pair on March 25 (H.B.) and three on July 4 (H.F.G.). River Mole at Cobham Mill, one on June 12 (J.E.S.D.).

**90 Pied Wagtail**

- M Inner London, Cripplegate bombed area, two pairs present all summer were seen carrying nesting material and insects, and fledged young were noted in June and July (S.D.H., E.H.W., R.B.W.). Ealing, birds gathering at dusk on the roof of a tall building on Sept. 25 alighted also in nearby trees in the street (A.V.T.).
- K Chislehurst, a flock of 40-50 in plane trees and on the roofs of farm buildings at dusk on Feb. 28 (J.F.B., D.F.O.). Hayes Common, a flock of 30-40 roosting in a small gravel pit on Mar. 23 (D.F.O.).

**91 White Wagtail**

- M Staines Moor, Staines Res. and King George VI Res., one-two on seven dates between Apr. 4 and May 2 (seven observers).
- K Elmers End S.F., a male on Apr. 2, 3, 6 (G.E.M.). Dartford S.F., a male and a female on Sept. 12 (J.F.B., D.F.O.).
- S Ham G.P., one on Apr. 20 (F.R.M.). Barn Elms Res., one on Sept. 15 (G.C.L.).

**93 Tree-Creeper**

- M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one on Apr. 5, Nov. 19 and Dec. 18; three or four with a mixed party of tits on Oct. 16 (E.M.C.E., G.C.L., W.G.T.). The park keeper, Sgt. Guthrie, reported seeing one carrying nesting material. Hyde Park, one on Nov. 24 (W.G.T.). Regent's Park, one singing persistently on Feb. 11 and March 10 (E.H.W.).

**96 Nuthatch**

- M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one on Sept. 30 (C.H.F.P.).

**108 Willow-Tit**

- E Chingford, one on Apr. 2 (W.A.W.). Epping Forest, one at the 1947 nest site on Apr. 2 (W.A.W.) and one-two at Connaught Water on Apr. 9 and 16 (K.E.H., A.E.J.).
- H Rickmansworth, two on Woodcock Hill on Feb. 26, Mar. 13 (J.A.B.), and one at Stocker's Lake on Dec. 5 (J.A.B.).
- M Potters Bar, a family party on June 26 (A.E.J.). Ruislip, three on Sept. 19 and Nov. 27 (T.L.B., S.C.). Stanmore, three-four (two singing males) at Bentley Priory and Stanmore Common, February to April and August to December (J.A.B.).
- K Chislehurst, one on Dec. 25 (D.F.O.). St Paul's Cray, one on Nov. 21 (R.C.H.).
- S Arbrook Common, two on Apr. 21 (K.P.K.). Bookham Common, three on Nov. 13, 14, and four on Dec. 12 (G.B., P.W.E.C., K.P.K.). Esher Common, two on Dec. 11 (K.P.K.). Walton Heath, a pair on Apr. 4 (D.A.T.M.). Worms Heath, one on Dec. 12 (R.C.H.).

**114 Great Grey Shrike**

- M Northwick Park, one below Harrow Hill in November 1947, and on Jan. 18, 1948, was well seen on both occasions (D.A.I.B.). Plumage details and very characteristic field sketches have been received.
- S Epsom Downs, one on Nov. 8 (H.B.). Walton Heath, one on Apr. 4 and 11 (D.A.T.M., R.E.S. *et al.*).

**119 Red-backed Shrike**

- E Bred as usual in Epping Forest (S.A., W.A.W.) and at Warley (P.F.C.R.). Harold Park, a male with three-four fledged young on July 25 (R.B.W.). Noted during the breeding season at Chingford and Hainault Forest.
- H Bred at Colney Heath (D.N.W.) and Totteridge (two pairs, E.R.G.K.). Present in the breeding season at Colney Street and Radlett.
- M Nested at Staines (one pair, R.W.HN.) and Stanmore (two-three pairs, J.A.B.). Noted as usual at Edgware, Enfield and Mill Hill but not known to have bred.
- K Biggin Hill, one pair bred; Erith Marshes, a pair observed in the breeding season at the locality where a pair bred in 1947 (J.F.B.).
- S Nested at Banstead Downs (one pair, S.H.C., L.M.), Bookham Common (one pair, P.W.E.C.), Mitcham Common (three pairs, C.B.A., C.J.O.H.), Putney Vale (one pair, R.W.HN.), South Croydon (two pairs, E.R.B., F.M.F.), Tadworth, Banstead Heath and Walton Heath (six-seven pairs, H.B.), and Walton-on-Thames (one pair, K.P.K.). At Dulwich, in the inner suburbs, a pair and three young were seen between July 2 and 27 (R.D.). At Putney Vale the young entered large wire refuse baskets in the cemetery to search for insects among the dead flowers and wreaths (R.W.HN.).

**120 Waxwing**

- S Kew Gardens, two on Mar. 25 (H.M.M.-W.). Full details have been received.

**121 Spotted Flycatcher**

- S Tadworth, 25 on Sept. 4 in three parties in small adjoining woods (H.B.; *cf.* *L.B.R.* for 1944, p. 6, and the *Handbook*, Vol. I, p. 300).

**123 Pied Flycatcher**

The following records are substantiated by detailed field notes:

- E Chingford, one on Aug. 28 (I.C.P., M.R.P.).
- K Bickley, two cocks on Apr. 18 (J.M.C.).
- S Epsom S.F., a male singing on May 15; Banstead Heath, one with a party of ten Spotted Flycatchers on Sept. 4 (H.B.).

**129/30 Chiffchaff**

- S Walton-on-Thames, one in a wet excavated patch on the site of the new reservoir on Feb. 1 (C.H., E.M.N.; see also *B.B.*, 41, p. 314). [Walton Heath, one probably of the Scandinavian race (*Phylloscopus c. abietinus*) was seen on Apr. 25 (H.B. in *B.B.*, 42, p. 23).]

**135 Wood-Warbler**

- E Nested in Epping Forest, as usual (s.k.). Warley, five singing males located (P.F.C.R.).
- H Cuffley, four-five singing in Great Wood during May (E.R.G.K.).
- M Hampstead Heath, two-three pairs present from April to July (V.R.G., H.M.R.K.). Mill Hill, a singing male remained through the breeding season (W.D.M.). Present as usual during the breeding season on Stanmore and Harrow Weald Commons (E.H.W.).
- K Probably nested at Chislehurst (F.J.H.), Hayes Common and Holwood Park, Keston (J.F.B.).
- S In Tadworth, Banstead Heath and Walton Heath area twelve pairs were noted in the breeding season and one nest was found (H.B.). Shirley Hills, three pairs probably nested (G.E.M.). Wimbledon Common, four singing males on May 15 *et seq.* occupied usual territories (R.W.HN., D.C.P.).

**145 Grasshopper-Warbler**

- E Sewardstone, one heard singing twice during early May but not subsequently (P.F.C.R.).
- H Colney Street, one was noted at Moor Mill G.P. on May 7 and 9 but not on later visits (E.H.W.). Rickmansworth, one at Springwell G.P. on May 30 (J.A.B.). West Hyde, one on Apr. 27 (C.H.F.P.).
- S Bookham Common, two pairs present during the breeding season and apparently also an unmated male on Apr. 25 (P.W.E.C. *et al.*).

**149 Reed-Warbler**

- E Barking, 24 pairs nested at Mayesbrook Park G.P. (H.E.A.). Chingford S.F., one pair bred (s.k.). Walthamstow Res. and nearby canal banks, several pairs noted on May 9 (R.W.HN.).
- H Nested at Colney Street, Moor Mill G.P. (two pairs, W.D.M., E.H.W., D.N.W.) and at Rickmansworth (several pairs, J.A.B.).
- M Feltham G.P., six-eight pairs, including two pairs with young, on June 1 (H.M.R.K.). Poyle G.P.'s, four pairs nested (W.G.T., C.H.F.P. *et al.*). Shepperton, one pair probably bred (E.M.G., E.W.P.). Present in the breeding season at Staines Moor, Syon House Marsh and West Drayton.
- K Nested on Abbey Wood Marshes (one pair at least, probably more, J.F.B.) and at Ruxley G.P. (one-three pairs, F.J.H., D.F.O.).
- S Barn Elms, one pair bred in the small gravel pit adjacent to the reservoirs (G.C.L., F.J.L.M.). Epsom S.F., c. 16 pairs nested; 11 nests were found in nettles, willow-herb, mallow, woody nightshade and dock (H.B., L.I.C.).

**153 Sedge-Warbler**

As this is considered to be a more generally distributed species than the Reed-Warbler, it is not usually recorded in detail. Since, however, no status report on the Sedge-Warbler has been prepared since 1934 (*L.N.*, 1934, p. 124) our knowledge of its status



and distribution in the Area needs bringing up to date. The Recorders will therefore welcome notes on this species in 1949 and 1950.

**[155/156 Icterine or Melodious Warbler**

E Epping Forest, a bird thought to have been either one or the other of these species was seen for about fifteen minutes feeding and singing from the top of a hawthorn near Connaught Water on Apr. 25 or 26 (D.L., J.R.S.). The plumage could be seen only with difficulty due to the foliage, but the observers noted "upper parts were greenish-brown and under-parts very yellowish; the inside of its mouth was orange and it erected a small crest on its head." The song was unfamiliar and vigorously uttered, "on the whole harsh, rather like a Sedge-Warbler with some clear passages, and notes reminiscent of a House-Sparrow and a Chaffinch." In view of the extreme rarity of Icterine and Melodious Warblers in this country and the fact that the observers, though evidently careful and responsible, are unfortunately not known personally to the Committee, it is difficult to accept this record without reserve. The habits and plumage details seem quite convincing, but the song, which should be the best means of separating these two species, as here described contains characteristics of both.]

**161 Garden-Warbler**

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one on Aug. 9 (J.MCH.).

**162 Blackcap**

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one on May 12 and 13 (J.MCH.).

**163 Whitethroat**

M Poyle G.P., one picking insects from a hedge on the very unusual date of Jan. 17. The bird was in good condition and would not allow a close approach although it often perched openly near the top of the hedge. The head and neck were smoke-grey, the upper parts greyish-brown (apparently greyer than in summer) and the throat white; there were conspicuous white margins to the tail in flight (J.A.B.).

**186/7 Wheatear**

Passage through the Area lasted from Mar. 20 to May 29 in the Spring, and from July 18 to Oct. 11 in the autumn.

M Details have been received of one probably of the Greenland form at the Brent Res. on May 24 (R.H.M.R.).

**197 Whinchat**

E Sewardstone, two pairs bred (P.F.C.R.). Probably bred at Brentwood S.F. (R.B.W.) and at Chingford S.F. (S.K.).

H Bred at Barnet (one pair, B.L.S.), Colney Street (one pair, W.D.M.) and Rickmansworth (six pairs, J.A.B.). One pair probably bred at Borehamwood (P.E.L.S.).

- M Bred near Brockley Hill (three pairs, J.A.B.), Hendon and Mill Hill (four pairs, E.H.W.), Staines Moor and Reservoir (three to four pairs, P.J.HN., C.H.F.P., E.H.W. *et al.*). One pair was present at Perry Oaks S.F. throughout the summer (P.J.HN.). Inner London, noted on passage in the bombed areas of the City: one on May 7 and 10, two on Sept. 4, one on Sept. 13 (S.D.H. *et al.*).
- K Abbey Wood Marshes, two pairs probably bred (J.F.B.).
- S No breeding records.

### 198 Stonechat

All records received are given; still very scarce.

- M Near Brockley Hill, one-two pairs probably nested (J.A.B., W.G.T.). Brent Res., a cock on Apr. 3; Mill Hill, a hen on Jan. 10 (E.H.W.).
- K Abbey Wood Marshes, one pair bred; nest found on May 18 and a male seen on Aug. 9; Slades Green Marshes, a cock on Nov. 14 (J.F.B.).
- S Leatherhead, a pair on Nov. 21; Walton Downs, a cock on Sept. 28 (H.B.). Walton Heath, a hen on Apr. 4 and a cock on Sept. 6 (H.B., D.A.T.M., A.G.G.T.).

### 201 Redstart

- E South Weald, a pair bred in Weald Park (K.D.G.M.). Noted during the breeding season at Chingford, in Epping Forest and at Warley, where six pairs were located (P.F.C.R. *et al.*).
- H Cuffley Great Wood, three singing males on May 1 and 17 (E.R.G.K.).
- M Nested in Bushy Park (one-two pairs, E.W.P.) and on Stanmore Common (four pairs, J.A.B., E.H.W.). Inner London, between Cheap-side and Gresham Street, a male sang between May 30 and June 4 (S.D.H., G.T.). Kensington Gardens, a cock was seen on Apr. 14 (R.W.HN., C.H.F.P.) and one was reported by the keeper on May 11.
- K Petts Wood, one pair nested; a second male was seen on June 19 (J.F.B., J.M.C.). Westerham, a singing male on Apr. 17 and a female on July 18 (H.B., H.F.G.).
- S Richmond Park, ten pairs nested; the first—a male—was seen on Mar. 31, an early date (R.W.HN., D.A.R.; see also *B.B.*, 42, p. 59).

### 202 Black Redstart

See special note on pp. 33-34.

### 227 Nightjar

- E Epping Forest, adults seen on July 19 and 26, and young birds heard calling (K.E.H., W.A.W.).
- H North Mimms, one on Aug. 9 (D.N.W.).
- M Noted in the breeding season at Ruislip (C.A.W.) and Stanmore (E.H.W.).
- K Near Bexley, two in Joyden's Wood on June 5 (D.F.O.). Hayes, two pairs nested (H.BP.).
- S Near Chelsham, one pair nested (H.F.G., H.E.P.). Headley Down, two adults and a juvenile just able to fly on July 25 (F.M.F.). Richmond Park, one on June 22 (A.F.K.).

**232 Hoopoe**

S Chipstead, one in a garden on July 29 and 30, 1948 (L. I. Carrington and B. Wood in *B.B.*, 42, p. 89).

[Kingswood, one was reported as frequenting gardens between Oct. 31 and Nov. 3, 1947, but no details were given (Camilla Livingston Smith, *Country Life*, 14.11.47).]

**235 Green Woodpecker**

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, an adult and an immature between Aug. 30 and Oct. 10 (E.M.C.E., W.G.T.). Regent's Park, one on Mar. 10 (E.H.W.).

**237 Great Spotted Woodpecker**

M Inner London, one-two in certain parks at all seasons.

**238 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker**

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one on Mar. 18, Nov. 18 and 19 (D.G., G.C.L., E.M.C.E.).

**239 Wryneck**

M Hampstead Garden Suburb, one from May 5-7 (G.W.).

K Bickley, one on June 20 (F.J.H.). Southfleet, one on Apr. 7 (J.S.S.B.).

S Fetcham and Leatherhead district, noted in April and May but no evidence of breeding; one on Aug. 28 (D.M.B., J.E.S.D., H.F.G.). Tadworth, one pair bred in identical position to last year (H.B., L.I.C.). One-two noted in April and May from Belmont, Bookham Common and South Croydon; one in Richmond Park on Aug. 31 (P.W.E.C., A.F.K., F.M.F.).

**249 Little Owl**

M Inner London, Regent's Park, one on May 2 (A.E.V.).

**250 Long-eared Owl**

M Near Perry Oaks S.F., one on Jan. 25 (R.H.M.R.; see also *L.B.R.*, 1947, p. 13).

**251 Short-eared Owl**

E Epping Forest, details have been received of one quartering the fields near Amersbury Banks for about half-an-hour on Feb. 1 (R.N.).

**254 Barn-Owl**

M Bred at Stanwell (R.W.H.N.) and in Hampton Court Park (E.M.G., E.W.P., B.A.R.).

K Barnehurst, one pair bred (W.I.B.).

S Bookham Common, 15 pellets found beneath roosting place from which a bird was flushed on Mar. 13 were analysed by Miss E. Nelmes; they contained, *inter alia*, skulls of 27 *Microtus hirtus*, 8 *Sorex araneus castaneus*, 1 *Evotomys glareolus*, 2 frogs (P.W.E.C.).

**259 Peregrine Falcon**

M Inner London, a tiercel seen circling over St James's Park lake at midday on Oct. 4 (E.M.N.). King George VI Res., one seen on many occasions between Oct. 9 and Dec. 19. It caused great panic amongst the ducks, gulls and waders when it first arrived, but when last seen it flew directly over a large flock of gulls and ducks without any of the birds taking flight, although some of the ducks raised their heads. It often settled on the water tower, where it probably roosted; it was seen to alight also on a stone on the bed of the partly drained reservoir and even on the mud (J.A.B., P.J.Hn., W.R.P., C.A.W. *et al.*).

K Eynsford, one on Jan. 25 flew near enough for moustachial stripe and other plumage details to be seen (J.s.s.B.).

**261 Hobby**

M In the Perry Oaks-Poyle-Staines area one was seen on May 30 and June 6, and one-two between July 25 and Sept. 12 (nine observers).

K Not observed in the North Kent area where birds were seen in 1946 and 1947 (J.F.B., D.F.O.; *cf.* *L.B.R.*, 1947, p. 14).

S Richmond Park, one in flight and later perched in a tree was well seen, Aug. 30 (A.F.K.).

**262 Merlin**

M Staines Res., one fully identified on Dec. 4 (J.A.B., P.J.Hn., C.A.W.). [King George VI Res., a bird seen in flight on Oct. 24 was probably of this species (J.S.A.)]

S Banstead Downs, a male seen at close quarters showing slate-grey back Nov. 20 (D.A.T.M., K.T.M.).

**263 Kestrel**

M Inner London, although there are records of pairs frequenting various church spires and other tall buildings, nests were found only at Hammersmith (F.J.L.M.) and Lambeth (T.L.B.).

S Richmond Park, for a note by R.W.Hn. on local concentration (six breeding pairs) see *B.B.*, 42, p. 90; one ringed in the park as a nestling on 15.vi.48 was recovered at Dorking (Surrey) on 4.viii.48.

**268/9 Buzzard** (species not determined).

M Inner London, one which was watched for seven minutes soaring over the Houses of Parliament on Jan. 8 once descended to the level of Big Ben before going out of sight in the direction of Charing Cross (T.L.B.). One was seen over Lord's Cricket Ground on Mar. 21 (H.M.R.K.) and one was reported by the Zoo staff in flight over Regent's Park towards the end of August (R.A.R.).

K Barnehurst, one circling high up on Apr. 12 (W.I.B.). Longfield, one seen gliding over on May 14 (J.s.s.B.).

**272/273 Montagu's/Hen Harrier**

H Letchmore Heath, field characters have been received of a white rumped female harrier which was watched on Sept. 30 alternately flapping and gliding at c. 150 feet above the ground before soaring to a great height (E.H.W.).

S Between Stoke d'Abernon and Oxshott, a harrier seen flying high on Apr. 18 alternated quick wing-beats with short glides, and also "dived and swerved violently, throwing itself about in a spectacular fashion," as if in display flight. The plumage was generally brown or grey-brown, with a whitish patch on the rump (J.H.L.).

**278 Kite**

E Epping Forest, one soaring and drifting at a considerable height on May 10 (S.A., W.A.W.; see also *B.B.*, 42, p. 60).

**289 Common Heron**

E Little Parndon, four pairs nested (W.A.W.). Walthamstow Res., 49 occupied nests (E.R.P., H.W.R., W.A.W.). Wanstead Park, five occupied nests and a sixth nest not completed (W.H.F.).

M Kempton Park, 57 occupied nests (E.W.P.).

S Gatton Park, 11 pairs nested in the area of the lake, Upper Fish Pond, Bushets and Gatton Gardens but more than half of the nests were robbed or destroyed (G.W.P.). Godstone, one pair nested by "Town" pond (H.B.). Richmond Park, eleven pairs nested (R.W.H.N.).

The total for the London Area was thus 138 occupied nests. A direct comparison with the 1947 total of 126 pairs is unreliable as access to Gatton in recent years has been difficult and the 1947 figure may be an understatement. A more reliable comparison with past years is possible by taking combined figures for Walthamstow Res., Wanstead Park, Kempton Park and Richmond Park, which have been counted regularly:—1946, 134; 1947, 118; 1948, 122. London Herons would therefore seem to have made little significant recovery from their low population in 1947 following the severe weather early in that year. To view this result in relation to the country as a whole, and for an explanation of the slow recovery of Herons in 1948, see W.B.A. in *B.B.*, 42, pp. 81-83.

Further information on the Heron's habits of swimming and flying down to the water to take fish is provided by J.W.L.'s observations at a small eight acre reservoir in the Kempton group, Middlesex, in 1947. (Previous notes have been given in *B.B.*, 36, pp. 142, 246; 37, p. 37; 38, pp. 136, 216, 256, 335; see also *L.B.R.*, 1947, p. 15). Possibly as a result of the cold spell a great many dead fish were seen floating on the surface in April and May, and some of these were taken by Herons:—

Apr. 6 (p.m.). Heron twice seen picking up dead fish from the middle of the reservoir; flew round about 20 feet above water until in a position to approach into the wind, came down at a gentle angle momentarily into the water, picked up the fish and rose at once, only just wetting the belly feathers and hardly closing the

wings. There was no difficulty in rising though on one occasion a second approach was needed to get the fish properly into the beak. The fish was carried to the bank and dropped there. After an interval the Heron tried to swallow it and several other dead fish also on the bank, and finally swallowed one of the latter. A second Heron was seen making an unsuccessful attempt, and an hour later one again tried but failed.

May 25 (a.m. and p.m.). Three unsuccessful attempts made: on each occasion the bird was apparently frightened off when about five feet above the water on the "approach flight," and went off for half an hour or more before trying again. (The Herons appeared very sensitive to disturbance during the performance and gave it up if conditions were not suitable). A Heron was seen to fly from the edge, settle a few yards out to retrieve a fish, and fly back to the bank with it.

June 30. Several successful mid-water captures; also a Heron seen wading out of its depth and then swimming to reach a fish, which it brought back to the bank by air, as usual. A juvenile of the year settled on the water 20 yards out and floated there for about two minutes before flying off. Judging by specimens left on the bank, the fish were roach and carp of up to eight ounces in weight.

### 297 Bittern

M Poyle G.P., one found dead on Apr. 17 had evidently been shot a week or two previously (C.H.).

### 301 Bewick's Swan

M Inner London, a good view was obtained of one swimming on the Serpentine about ten yards from the bank during the afternoon of Mar. 6. It swam away when approached and presently flew up, making two circuits at 50 feet, calling (S.C., K.D.B.T.).

S Richmond Park, three adults and one immature bird stayed from Dec. 8-28 (R.W.H.N., D.A.R. *et al.*). Three adults and an immature which were seen at Hedgecourt Lake, near East Grinstead (outside the Society's Area) on Jan. 1, 1949, were almost certainly the same individuals; they remained there until the third week of March, 1949 (C.W.G.P.).

### 304 White-fronted Goose

E Rainham, eleven flew over Berwick Pond on Dec. 25 sufficiently low for the white front and barring of the underparts of some to be seen (M.J.A.).

### 314 Canada Goose

T Brentford, one on exposed mud beside the river at Syon House on Jan. 22 (K.V.E.).

S Battersea Park, one by the lake in May (R.O.).



BEWICK'S SWANS (p. 18).

*Upper* : in Richmond Park, Surrey, December 1948. *Photo* : R. C. Homes.

*Lower* : on Hedgecourt Lake, Surrey, February 1949. *Photo* : C. W. G. Paulson.





**Ducks**

As the results of the census of 1947-48 and of the early winter of 1948-49 are given in a separate article on pp. 46-56, together with the winter numbers of the more regular species, the following notes are confined to the remaining species and to items of particular interest.

**315 Sheld-Duck**

E King George V Res., one on Feb. 18 (W.A.W.).

M Perry Oaks S.F., one immature on Aug. 30 (P.J.HN.). Staines Res., one on Jan. 24 (J.A.B., K.P.K.) and two on May 2 (P.J.HN.). King George VI Res., an immature on Sept. 4 and 5 (J.A.B., R.DAC., W.G.T.), three from Nov. 6-8 (G.C.L., B.A.R., C.A.W., J.A.W.), four on Dec. 18 and 23 (J.A.W., C.A.W.).

T Barn Elms Res., three on Jan. 24 (S.C.) and two on Apr. 18 (G.C.L.).

**318 Gadwall**

M Staines Res., a drake on July 10 (C.A.W.).

S Beddington S.F. pond, a pair from Mar. 20 to June 5, and two on Oct. 31 (C.B.A.).

T Barn Elms Res., maximum 17 on Jan. 4, Nov. 15 and Dec. 30 (F.J.L.M., E.G.P., B.A.R.); of eleven small young seen with a pair on July 20 (R.S.B.) three had vanished by the 23rd, but seven still survived on Sept. 16 (R.S.H.).

**319 Teal**

M Perry Oaks S.F., a drake during the breeding season (C.A.W.). Staines Moor, a duck on July 10 (J.A.B.). Staines Res., c. 600 on Dec. 19 (J.A.B.).

S Beddington S.F. pond, three drakes on May 8 (C.B.A.).

**322 Garganey**

As in other inland localities, the number of records of this species in the London Area is increasing, and careful watch should be kept for evidence of breeding.

E Lea Valley, three drakes and three ducks on Mar. 20 and 27 (H.W.R., W.A.W.) and at least three on Mar. 31 (W.A.W.). Chingford, a duck on Aug. 22 (H.W.R.). Rainham, up to two pairs from June 6 to July 11, and one bird on Aug. 6 (M.J.A.).

H Colney Street, a pair on Mar. 29 (E.H.W.). Rickmansworth, a pair on Mar. 26 (J.A.B.).

M The first seen were a pair on Staines Moor on Mar. 20 (C.A.W.); subsequently birds reported from Perry Oaks S.F., Poyle G.P.s., Staines Moor and Res. until June 12 (P.J.HN., C.A.W. *et al.*). The total number was uncertain but two drakes and two ducks were noted at Staines on Apr. 18 and five drakes on May 9 (J.A.B.). East Bedford, a pair on Apr. 4 (E.R.P.). In August and September again reported from the Staines-Perry Oaks area, max. seven at King George VI Res. on Aug. 22 and Sept. 4 (J.A.B.). Late dates: Staines Res., two drakes on Sept. 26 (J.A.B.) and two on Oct. 9 (P.J.HN., C.A.W.).

**325 Pintail**

E King George V Res., two on Feb. 25 (W.A.W.) and a drake on Oct. 30 (K.E.H.).

M Brent Res., a drake from Jan. 10-17 (J.A.B., T.B., E.H.W.). King George VI and Staines Res., nine on Jan. 17 (R.J.R.), one to two from Feb. 1 to 14 and on Mar. 23, but five on Mar. 20 (C.A.W. *et al.*); a drake on Oct. 16 and one to four from Dec. 11 to 19 (H.A.B., W.D.M., J.A.W.).

T Barn Elms Res. and R. Thames, one to two on various dates from Jan. 25 to Mar. 31, a duck on Sept. 11 and 25, and one to three from Dec. 8 to 31 (many observers).

**326 Shoveler**

M Perry Oaks S.F., three pairs were present throughout the breeding season (J.A.B.) and on Aug. 12 eleven young were seen (P.J.H.N., C.H.S., G.W.M., C.A.W.). This is the first definite breeding record for the county. Pairs noted in June also at Hampton and Poyle (C.B.A., E.W.P., W.G.T.).

**328 Pochard**

The unusually high numbers in the winter of 1947-48 are discussed on pages 51-52. The largest flocks were at Staines: 1256 on Jan. 17, 1010 on Feb. 14 and 553 on Mar. 6 (C.A.W.); and at King George V Res. (Essex): c. 400 on Jan. 17 (W.A.W.).

M St James's Park, one ringed on 23.iv.47 was recovered in Buckingham Palace Gardens on 17.ii.48; one ringed on 5.vi.47 was recovered at Hackbridge, Surrey, on 16.x.48 (T.L.B.).

**330 Tufted Duck**

E Bred at Mayesbrook Park (one pair, H.E.A.) and Walthamstow Res. (five females with young, W.A.W.).

H Colney Street, one pair bred at Old Parkbury G.P. (W.D.M.).

M A few at several localities in the breeding season but no proof of breeding except in St James's Park. One ringed in St James's Park on 15.iii.47 by T.L.B. was recovered at Dulwich, Surrey, on 29.xi.48.

T Barn Elms Res., two females with young in July (F.J.L.M.).

**331 Scaup-Duck**

K Danson Park lake, a drake and a duck on Oct. 30 (J.F.B.).

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, an immature drake and later an adult drake were seen by many observers on the Round Pond and the Long Water between Jan. 1 and Mar. 26; St James's Park, a duck on Sept. 25 (S.C.). Brent Res., a drake on Apr. 7 and 25 (E.H.W.).

T Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road Res., a duck on Jan. 4 and Feb. 1 (R.S.H., G.C.L., F.J.L.M.), a drake on Feb. 22 and Mar. 8 (R.W.H.N., J.A.W., A.W.), one on Oct. 9 and 10 (G.C.L., F.J.L.M.) and on Dec. 31 (F.J.L.M.).

**332 Goldeneye**

January to April, maximum 13 at Staines Res. on Mar. 6 (J.A.B., C.A.W.). The last seen in spring were five at Staines Res. on Apr. 24 and the first in autumn were two there on Sept. 18 (H.A.B., J.A.B.).

M Inner London, an immature drake was seen on the Round Pond and on St James's Park lake on 23 dates between Jan. 6 and Apr. 15. On the dates when it was noted at one locality it was not seen at the other. It was joined by another at St James's Park between Feb. 7 and 17 (T.L.B., C.H.F.P., G.T. *et al.*).

**334 Long-tailed Duck**

M The bird which frequented the lake in St James's Park was last seen by T. L. Bartlett on Aug. 5, 1947 (c.f. *L.B.R.*, 1947, pp. 19-20).

**339 Common Scoter**

M Staines Res., a drake and two ducks on Jan. 17 (R.J.R.) and a duck found dead on Mar. 6 (P.J.Hn.).

S Richmond Park, a duck on Apr. 7 (R.W.Hn.).

T Barn Elms Res., one on Oct. 1 (S.C.) and five or six on Oct. 30 on the Thames and later on Lonsdale Road Res. (C.E.L., R.H.M.R., J.A.W.).

**340 Velvet-Scoter**

E Walthamstow Res., an adult drake on Oct. 30 (K.E.H.).

M Brent Res., an adult drake and two to three ducks or immatures on Oct. 30 (S.K.); a drake found dead on Nov. 27 (T.B.). Staines Res., five adult drakes and 15 ducks or immatures on Oct. 30 (C.B.A., J.A.B., E.R.P., W.G.T.).

S Walton Res., one on Oct. 30 (H.F.G.).

T Barn Elms Res., a drake on Nov. 14 (G.C.L., W.G.T.).

**342 Goosander**

Numbers unusually low; the largest flock recorded was of 76 at Queen Mary Res., Middlesex, on Feb. 14 (R.dac.).

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, a brown-headed bird was seen in flight over the Long Water on Mar. 9 (J.MCh.). Staines Moor, a duck on June 1 appeared winged, and pattered along the surface of the R. Colne before going into covert (P.J.Hn.).

**343 Red-breasted Merganser**

E King George V Res., an adult male on Oct. 30 (K.E.H.).

**344 Smew**

E Walthamstow Res., maximum 24 (ten drakes) on Feb. 4 (W.A.W.).

H Aldenham Res., one on Jan. 18 (P.E.L.S.) and six on Dec. 29 (R.A.S.M.). Colney Street, one on Nov. 21; London Colney, one on Dec. 27 (D.N.W.). Hamper Mill, one on Feb. 15 (J.A.B.).

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, a brown-headed bird on Jan. 3 (C.H.); St James's Park, one brown-headed from Mar. 7 to 9 (P.J.Hn., H.M.R.K., E.C.W.). Recorded at Brent Res., Feltham G.P.,

Kempton Park Res., Queen Mary, Staines and Stoke Newington Reservoirs; maximum 24 at Brent on Dec. 20 (E.R.G.K.).

S West Molesey Reservoirs, 73 on Mar. 6, when there were 40 at Barn Elms (census). Ham G.P., five on Dec. 28 (F.R.M.).

T Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road Res., maximum flock on one group of reservoirs was 54 (20 drakes) on Feb. 28.

### 346 Cormorant

E Walthamstow Res., one on Sept. 9 and 19 (H.W.R., W.A.W.).

H Rickmansworth, one at Stocker's Lake on Dec. 5 (J.A.B.).

M Harringay, one flying west over main road on Aug. 20 (D.N.W.).  
King George VI, Queen Mary and Staines Reservoirs, one-two on Jan. 18, Apr. 5, Aug. 14 to Oct. 2.

K Dartford Marsh, one on Sept. 12 and Dec. 27 (J.F.B., D.F.O.).

T Barn Elms Res. and Thames at Kew, noted from Jan. 31 to Mar. 27, on Aug. 15 and Dec. 25; max. nine on Feb. 27 (J.W.L. *et al.*).

### 349 Gannet

M Hayes, a second year bird was caught on the edge of a cornfield in the early afternoon of Aug. 6. Before eventually being released at Gosport about Aug. 21 it was kept in a chicken run and fed on herrings. It was often let out but it made no attempt to fly away although it appeared in good condition (H.A.B., P.J.H.N., R.V.T., C.A.W.).

### 370 Great Crested Grebe

See p. 35 for a report on breeding season status.

### 371 Red-necked Grebe

T Barn Elms Res., one from Nov. 4 until Dec. 11 (G.C.L. *et al.*).

### 373 Slavonian Grebe

M Poyle G.P., one in full breeding plumage was noted on nine dates between Apr. 5 (K.V.E.) and June 1. On Apr. 25 and 26, and from June 6 to Aug. 2, a similar one, probably the same, was seen on Staines Res.; records of a single bird there between Aug. 29 and Sept. 21 may refer to a different individual (many observers). During its stay at Poyle the bird was seen to bring pieces of weed to the surface and make an attempt at nest building (T.B.; see also *B.B.*, 41, p. 351).

### 374 Black-necked Grebe

E Walthamstow Res., one on Aug. 28 (W.A.W.).

M King George VI Res., three on Apr. 24 and one on Aug. 21, Sept. 4 and 26 (J.A.B., P.J.H.N.). Staines Res., noted frequently between Apr. 4 and Oct. 31 and on four dates between Nov. 2 and Dec. 12; maxima for each month are as follows: Apr., two; May, three; June, nine; July, six; Aug., fourteen (J.A.B.); September, thirteen; Oct., eight; Nov., one; Dec., four (many observers). Full

or almost full summer plumage was noted in up to four of the birds between Apr. 4 and Aug. 14.

- T Barn Elms Res., one in summer plumage between July 30 and Aug. 7 (R.S.B., H.F.G., E.MCE. *et al.*). One on the Thames near Syon House on Dec. 31 (K.L.).

### 378 Black-throated Diver

M Staines Res., an oiled bird which was first noted on Jan. 11 was cleaner on the breast by Jan. 24, and appeared to be quite free of oil when last seen on Feb. 8 (many observers).

- T Thames at Mortlake, one on Mar. 9 (K.V.E.). One, presumably the same, was present at the Lonsdale Road filter beds from Mar. 20 until it was captured and transferred to Barn Elms Reservoirs on Apr. 12. On Apr. 18 it was found dead and a post mortem examination revealed mycosis and a heavy helminthic infection. When seen on the water it appeared clean, but in the hand was found to be oiled. This may have been the bird seen previously at Staines (R.W.HN., G.C.L. *et al.*).

### 379 Red-throated Diver

- M Inner London, Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, one was seen on the Serpentine and the Long Water on Feb. 9; the following day it was seen lying on the bank and on the 11th found dead, badly oiled (J.MCH., G.C.L., D.F.O., C.H.F.P.). Queen Mary Res., an oiled bird on Mar. 6 was found dead the next day (R.DAC., E.G.P.).  
 K Ruxley G.P., one, badly oiled, from Feb. 29 until it was found dead on Mar. 5; a post mortem examination proved it a male (J.F.B., F.J.H., D.F.O.).

### 381 Stock-Dove

- M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one pair nested (G.C.L., E.MCE., C.H.F.P.).

### 383 Turtle-Dove

- K St Mary Cray, c. 50 in a strawberry field on May 30 (D.F.O.).  
 S Epsom S.F., 25-30 on Sept. 3 (H.B.).

### 387 Black-tailed Godwit

- M Perry Oaks S.F., two well seen on July 19 (P.J.HN.).

### 388 Common Curlew

Mainly noted on autumn passage in various localities between July and September, particularly in the Perry Oaks-Staines area of Middlesex; records at other seasons are as follows:—

- M Poyle G.P., Staines Moor and Reservoir, single birds on Mar. 20, June 5, Nov. 20, and six on June 25 (J.A.B., P.J.HN., E.H.W.).  
 K Longfield, one on Feb. 22 (J.S.S.B.).

**389 Whimbrel**

- M Kenton, one flying over, calling, on Aug. 2 (J.A.B.). Perry Oaks, Staines Moor and Reservoir, one to four on July 10, Aug. 14-22 and Sept. 18 (J.A.B., C.D., P.J.Hn., C.A.W.).
- K Bickley, several heard calling while passing over on Aug. 21 (J.M.C.). Dartford Marshes, one on Aug. 27 (G.B.).
- S East Sheen, one heard calling in flight after dark on May 9 (E.G.P.).
- T Barn Elms Res., one on Apr. 22 and May 2 (G.C.L., R.H.M.R.).

**393 Woodcock**

- M Single birds reported from Bushy Park, Jan.-Mar. and Nov.-Dec. (E.W.P.), and from Hampstead Heath, April, June and October (V.R.G.).
- K Longfield, one on Feb. 21 (J.S.S.B.).
- S Bookham Common, one on Mar. 27, July 11, Aug. 8 and Dec. 2 (G.B., P.W.E.C.). Dulwich Common, one on Dec. 18 (H.E.P.). Richmond Park, two on Mar. 20 (R.W.Hn.). Walton Heath, one on Jan. 11 (D.M.B.).

**395 Common Snipe**

- S Mitcham Common, many were present from Sept. 1947 until March 1948 on a part of the common which has been claimed for agriculture, and were to be seen by day resting in furrows; the largest flock was of 210 on Nov. 25, 1947 (C.J.O.H.; see *Trans. Herts. N.H.S.*, Vol. xxii, p. 121, for a similar account of a daytime resting ground).

**398 Jack Snipe**

- E Barking, one at Mayesbrook Park G.P. on May 26 (H.E.A.).
- H Colney Street, one to four at Moor Mill, Jan.-May, one in June, July and August, two on Oct. 24 *et seq.* (W.D.M., E.H.W., D.N.W.).
- M Brent Res., one on Oct. 21 (D.G.H., R.H.M.R.). King George VI Res., one on Dec. 26 (J.H., G.T.W.M.).
- K Elmers End S.F., one on Nov. 7 and 21 (G.E.M.).

**400/401 Phalarope** (species not determined).

- M King George VI Res., one in winter plumage on a pool among the shingle beds of the partly drained reservoir on Nov. 8 (J.A.W.).

**402 Turnstone**

- M A noticeable increase in the number of records. Perry Oaks S.F., Staines Moor and Res., and King George VI Res., one to four between May 1 and June 6; up to seven seen almost daily from Aug. 7 to 24, mainly at Perry Oaks (many observers).

**403 Knot**

- E King George Res., one on the exposed mud of the half-empty reservoir on Oct. 30 (K.E.H.).
- M King George VI Res., three on Sept. 25 and 26, one on Sept. 29 (H.A.B., R.dac., R.H.M.R. *et al.*).

**404/5 Dunlin**

- E King George Res., c. 12 on Oct. 30 (K.E.H.).
- M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one on the shore by the basins at the head of the Long Water on Apr. 23 (C.E.H.). Brent Res., eight on Sept. 4 and 5 (G.W.). Queen Mary Res., c. 15 on Sept. 11 (P.A.D.H.). Perry Oaks S.F., Staines Moor and Res., and King George VI Res., up to 18 recorded intermittently between Mar. 24 and June 6; larger numbers almost daily from July 14 to Nov. 20, maxima for each month being: July, 35; Aug., 48; Sept., 70; Oct., 53; Nov., 10; one on Dec. 12 (many observers).
- K Dartford Marshes, four on Aug. 14, eleven on Aug. 27: Swanscombe, c. 15 feeding on the tide line on Jan. 10 (G.B., F.J.H.).
- S Richmond Park, three on July 22 and one on July 27 (F.R.M.). Walton S.F., six on July 24, one on Aug. 12, three on Aug. 17 (P.A.D.H., D.A.T.M., K.T.M.).
- T Barn Elms Res., up to five in February, April, May, July and August (many observers).

**406 Curlew-Sandpiper**

- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on May 24, 25 and July 31, and up to six frequently between Aug. 2 and 22; King George VI Res., two on Sept. 11 and up to five from Sept. 25 to Oct. 16 (P.J.H.N., C.A.W. *et al.*). At Perry Oaks one of the birds was seen to settle in soft sludge from which it could not escape; it was seen dead the next day (C.A.W.).

**407 Little Stint**

- M Poyle G.P., two on May 10 (R.DAC., E.G.P.). Perry Oaks S.F., one on July 25, 26, Aug. 7, 8, Aug. 21-24; King George VI Res., one on Sept. 11 and from Sept. 26 to Oct. 2 (many observers).

**416 Sanderling**

- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on Aug. 9 (P.J.H.N., C.A.W.). King George VI Res., two on Aug. 14 (F.M.F., H.F.G.) and one Sept. 4-12 and Oct. 2 (R.E.S. *et al.*).
- T Barn Elms Res., one on Feb. 25 and 26 (E.McE., J.McH.), two on May 24 (B.A.R., R.H.M.R.) and one on Aug. 13 (C.J.O.H.).

**417 Ruff**

- E King George Res., one on Sept. 29; Walthamstow Res., one on Sept. 30 and Oct. 2 (K.E.H., W.A.W.).
- M Staines Res., one on Apr. 18 (J.A.B.). Perry Oaks S.F., up to three almost daily from Aug. 2-19, nine on Aug. 22, 24, seven from Aug. 28 to Sept. 1, thereafter up to four until Sept. 19; King George VI Res., one on Sept. 4, Oct. 9 and 10 (many observers).
- S Walton S.F., a male and a female on Aug. 12 (D.A.T.M., K.T.M.).

**421 Common Sandpiper**

Passage through the Area lasted from Apr. 21 to May 26 in the spring and from July 10 to Oct. 2 in the autumn; max. 27 in small parties at Perry Oaks S.F. on Aug. 11 (P.J.HN.).

M Ashford, one at a gravel pit on Mar. 20 (H.A.C.; cf. *L.B.R.*, 1945, p. 18, and 1946, p. 25).

**423 Wood-Sandpiper**

M Perry Oaks S.F., up to three almost daily from Aug. 2 to 18 (P.J.HN., C.A.W. *et al.*). Staines Res., one on Aug. 29 (H.A.B.).

**424 Green Sandpiper**

Main passage through the Area was from July 3 to Oct. 24; during this period ones and twos (occasionally eight to ten) were reported from many localities. Records at other seasons are as follows:

E Chingford, two by River Lea on Feb. 20 (S.K.). Upminster, one flew over observer's house on Dec. 25 (M.J.A.).

H Rickmansworth, two on cress beds on Mar. 13 and 26, and one at a gravel pit on Dec. 5 (J.A.B.).

M Perry Oaks S.F., one on Jan. 25, two on Feb. 8, one on Feb. 14 and Apr. 29 (J.A.B., P.J.HN., R.H.M.R.). Poyle G.P., two on Jan. 4, one on Mar. 13, Apr. 18, June 13, June 26 and Nov. 14 (R.DAC., P.J.HN., E.G.P., B.A.R.). Staines Moor and Res., one on Apr. 17, 18 and 24 (C.A.W. *et al.*).

**432 Greenshank**

E Chingford, one on July 10 and 18 (E.R.P., H.W.R.). Walthamstow Res., two on Aug. 14, four on Aug. 28 (W.A.W.).

M Mill Hill, one flying west on July 16 (E.H.W.). Perry Oaks-Poyle-Staines area, up to five almost daily from July 24 to Sept. 18 (many observers).

S Richmond Park, two on Aug. 5, one on Aug. 17, three on Aug. 25 and one on Sept. 4 (C.L.C. *et al.*). Walton S.F., one on July 24, three on Aug. 12, one on Aug. 17 (P.A.D.H., D.A.T.M., K.T.M.).

T Barn Elms Res., two on Apr. 21 (H.A.C., D.A.T.M.) and one on May 16 (F.J.L.M.); up to five from Aug. 19 to Sept. 2 (R.S.B., A.G.G.T. *et al.*).

**435/6 Ringed Plover**

E Harold Wood, a party flew N.E., calling, on May 23 (R.B.W.). Tilbury, three by the Thames on Aug. 14 (M.J.A.). Walthamstow Res., one on Oct. 2 (K.E.H.).

H Colney Street, one at Moor Mill G.P. on Mar. 6 and 11 (W.D.M., E.H.W.).

M *Spring passage*:—Perry Oaks S.F., up to 27 between May 24 and June 6; Staines Moor, Staines Res., King George VI Res., one-two between Mar. 31 and May 2. *Autumn passage*:—Perry Oaks S.F., up to six from July 31 to Aug. 5, 14-20 between Aug. 7 and 12, 32-56 between Aug. 14 and 22, then up to six irregularly until Sept. 18; Staines Res., one on Aug. 15; King George VI Res., one on



Aug. 1, 6-20 between Sept. 4 and Oct. 3, one-two intermittently until Nov. 7 (many observers). Brent Res., one on July 24 (s.k.), three on Sept. 4 (g.w.) and one on Oct. 3 (p.r.k.).

- K Dartford Marshes, 12 on Aug. 14, six on Aug. 27, one on Sept. 26; Grove Park, several heard flying over at 11.15 p.m. on Sept. 11; Swanscombe Marshes, four on Jan. 10, one on Aug. 17 (g.b., f.j.h., d.f.o.).
- T Barn Elms Res., one on Feb. 25 (e.mce., j.mch.), two on May 16 (f.j.l.m.), one on Oct. 6 (r.s.b.).

#### 438 Little Ringed Plover

In 1948 there was a further increase and spread of Little Ringed Plovers, which bred in the Area for the fifth successive year. A full report of the occurrences in Southern England is given by E. R. Parrinder in *B.B.*, 41, pp. 377-383, and the following is a brief summary of the London Area records:—

- E Six pairs occupied the locality where the species was first recorded for Essex in 1947. All the pairs showed breeding behaviour, but proof of nesting was obtained for two pairs only; seven chicks are known to have hatched. One pair nested at a new site, a gravel pit, and two-four young were fledged.
- H Three birds were seen to visit a gravel pit on June 11 and a single bird was present on July 6, but there was no evidence of nesting.
- M Nine or eleven pairs were present at seven localities and six pairs are known to have nested; at least 14 chicks hatched and of these five were seen to fly.
- K One was seen on three occasions at the gravel pit where a pair bred in 1947, but there was no evidence of nesting.

#### 440/1 Golden Plover

- E Chigwell, 120-150 with Lapwings on Feb. 2, and c. 30 near King George Res. on Feb. 18 (s.a., w.a.w.).
- H Colney Street, 37 at Old Parkbury G.P. on Mar. 14 and 60 on Dec. 27 (d.n.w.). Radlett, two on Jan. 17 (w.d.m.).
- M Feltham-Harlington-Staines area, three on Mar. 20, 15 on Apr. 6; one to seven between Sept. 19 and Dec. 23, and c. 40 on Dec. 28 (eight observers).
- K Eynsford, one on Feb. 29 (j.s.s.b.). Dartford Marshes, six with c. 20 Lapwings on Dec. 27 (d.f.o.). Northfleet, c. 12 with flock of c. 800 Lapwings on Nov. 14, rising to 100/150 with c. 3500 Lapwings on Dec. 19 (k.h.h., d.f.o.).

#### 444 Grey Plover

- H Colney Street, one at Old Parkbury G.P. on Sept. 11 (e.h.w.).
- M Perry Oaks S.F., one in summer plumage, May 24-26 (p.j.hn., c.a.w.). King George VI Res., four on Nov. 7 (b.a.r.).

#### 449 Lapwing

- S Richmond Park, three pairs bred, probably four (r.w.hn., d.a.r.). See *L.B.R.*, 1947, p. 28.

**452 Oystercatcher**

M Staines Res., one on Mar. 6 (R.dac.), Aug. 15 (J.A.B.), Sept. 23 (J.E.M.).

K Dartford Marshes, one on Sept. 5 (K.H.H., D.F.O.).

**454/5 Pratincole**

S Barn Elms Res., one on Sept. 8 and 11 (H.A.B., R.S.B., A.W.; see also *B.B.*, 42, p. 221).

**456 Stone-Curlew**

S Bookham Common, one on Apr. 11 (P.W.E.C., K.P.K.). Richmond Park, one was well seen in flight on May 9 (E.H.). These are the first records for the London Area since 1941.

**462 Black Tern**

An account of the exceptional passage of Black Terns in the spring of 1948 is given in *B.B.*, 42, pp. 113-117.

*Spring passage:—*

H Elstree Res., seven from May 19 to 21 (M.E.R.).

M Highgate ponds, seven on May 20 (H.M.R.K.). Feltham G.P., Poyle G.P., and Staines Moor, up to five, May 18-20 (K.V.E. *et al.*). Staines Res., four on May 9, 22 on May 20, 25 on May 22 and one on May 25 (P.J.H.N. *et al.*).

T Barn Elms Res., up to 12 from Apr. 29 to May 29, but c. 30 on May 21 (G.C.L. *et al.*).

*Autumn passage:—*

E Walthamstow Res., two on Sept. 27 (W.A.W.).

M Brent Res., one on July 26 (E.R.G.K.). Staines Res. and King George VI Res., one on July 3 and up to five between Aug. 20 and Oct. 3 (many observers).

T Barn Elms Res., one on Aug. 8, up to three between Sept. 2 and 15, one on Sept. 26 (D.A.T.M., A.G.G.T. *et al.*).

**467 Sandwich Tern**

E Chingford, six on May 22 (W.A.W.). Walthamstow Res., two on May 23 (H.W.R.).

M Staines Res., two on Aug. 14 (F.M.F., H.F.G.). King George VI Res., one on Sept. 21 (R.W.H.N.).

T Barn Elms Res., 20 on May 21 (G.C.L.).

**469/470 Common/Arctic Terns**

In view of the difficulty of distinguishing these species in the field, and the unreliability of the presence of a black tip to the bill unless seconded by other field characters, (see *L.B.R.*, 1946, p. 28, and 1947, p. 29), Common and Arctic Terns are here treated under one heading. Where specific identity is claimed in the following list supporting details have been received.

*Spring passage:—*

- E Chingford, two on May 16 (H.W.R.).  
 H Hamper Mill, one on May 15 (E.H.W.).  
 M Feltham G.P., six on Apr. 5 (K.V.E.). Perry Oaks S.F., one Arctic on June 6 (J.A.B.). Poyle G.P., one on June 6 (R.W.HN.). Staines Res., two on May 22 and one on May 25 (P.J.HN., C.A.W.).  
 T Barn Elms Res., one to three, May 16-19 (S.C., A.G.G.T. *et al.*).

*Autumn passage:—*

- E Tilbury, two over the Thames on Aug. 14 (M.J.A.). King George Res., two Arctics on Sept. 29 (W.A.W.). Walthamstow Res., one to four, Sept. 19-Oct. 2; one Common on Oct. 2 (K.E.H. *et al.*).  
 M Brent Res., two on Sept. 21 (D.V.F.). Hampton, one on Sept. 13 (P.F.Y.). Queen Mary Res., two on Aug. 28 (P.A.D.H.). Staines Res. and King George VI Res., noted between July 10 and Oct. 3; max. 14 on Sept. 13 and 15 (P.F.Y. *et al.*); one Common on Sept. 4 and 23 (J.E.M., W.G.T. *et al.*).  
 T Barn Elms Res., up to nine irregularly between Aug. 12 and Oct. 24 (R.S.B., A.G.G.T. *et al.*).

**471 Little Tern**

- M Staines Res., one on Sept. 22 (K.V.E.) and three on Sept. 29 (R.H.M.R.).  
 T Barn Elms Res., one on Sept. 12 (R.S.B.) and six on Sept. 15 (G.C.L.).

**477 Little Gull**

- M King George VI Res., an immature on Sept. 4 (J.A.B., E.MCE., W.G.T.), and one in similar plumage at Staines Res. on Sep. 18 and 19 (C.A.W.). These records are fully supported by field notes.  
 T Barn Elms Res., an adult in flight on Jan. 31 was noticeably smaller than accompanying Black-headed Gulls, and came close enough for dark under-sides of wings and absence of black on primaries to be noted (J.MCH., F.J.L.M.).

**478 Black-headed Gull**

- M Perry Oaks S.F., the nesting colony reported in the *L.B.R.*, 1946, pp. 28-29, and 1947, p. 30, continued this year at about the same strength as in 1947; 312 nests were counted on May 30 and chicks were first noted on May 22 (C.H., C.A.W. *et al.*).

The following recoveries of birds ringed in the London Area have been notified in 1948; with one exception all were ringed by T. L. Bartlett.

<i>Date and place of ringing.</i>	<i>Date and place of recovery.</i>
18.ii.39—St James's Park .....	23.ii.45—Where ringed.
(ringed by W. D. Park)	

The above was re-ringed when captured on 23.ii.45 and was again recovered:

23.ii.45—St James's Park ..... -vi.48—Samsö, Kattegatt.

- 29.xi.42—Hammersmith ..... 26.ii.48—Where ringed.  
 30.xii.43—St James's Park ..... 26.ii.48—Where ringed.  
 3.iii.44—Westminster ..... 21.iii.48—Rinkjöbing, Denmark.  
 6.xi.46—St James's Park ..... 29.xi.48—Gravesend, Kent.  
 27.ii.48—St James's Park ... 3.vii.48—Middelfaart, Fyen, Denmark.

#### 484/5 Lesser Black-backed Gull

Winter records of up to 20 have been received from Rickmansworth, Watford, Feltham, Hampton, Staines, Barn Elms Res., and the Thames at Hammersmith and Westminster. Much larger numbers were recorded on passage, particularly in the autumn, when, although many were reported singly or in small parties, large flocks occurred; for example, flocks of 130, 285 and c. 400 were recorded, as well as nine flocks of between 50 and 100 and sixteen between 20 and 49. A small proportion of both winter and passage birds were, as usual, considered to be of the Scandinavian race.

#### 486 Great Black-backed Gull

H/M/K/S. Up to 12 recorded from various localities as usual in winter but unusually large flocks counted by E.W.P. at Hampton Filter Beds, Middlesex: 104 on Jan. 24, 188 on Jan. 31, 64 on Dec. 8. Passage and summer records are as follows:

E Walthamstow Res., two on Sept. 8 and one on Sept. 30 (W.A.W.).

M Staines, two on Apr. 11 and 24 and May 8 (J.A.B., C.A.W.).

K Ruxley G.P., one on June 20 (F.J.H.).

S Epsom S.F. and Mitcham Common, one at each locality on Sept. 17 (H.B.). Lambeth, one on Sept. 27 (A.V.T.).

T Barn Elms Res., one on Aug. 29 and two on Sept. 29 (G.C.L.).

#### 487 Glaucous Gull

T Barnes Bridge, an adult on Jan. 17 had a heavier bill and head and was generally larger than a nearby Herring Gull (B.A.R.). Barn Elms Res., an immature on Mar. 24 was described as being as large as a Greater Black-backed Gull (M.C.); an immature there on Dec. 29 was slightly larger than a Herring Gull and the broad wings gave a slow and heavy appearance in flight (C.J.O.H.). [An immature at Barn Elms on Feb. 18 was not seen well enough for an estimate of size, etc., to be obtained (M.C.).]

#### 487/8 Glaucous/Iceland Gull

The following records refer either to Iceland Gulls or to small examples of the Glaucous Gull. By former standards these would have been considered to be Iceland, but now that identification is known to be more difficult (see *L.B.R.*, 1944, 45, 46, 47, and *B.B.*, 40, pp. 369-373) greater caution is necessary. The identification of the Iceland Gull is based on such fine points of difference that it is extraordinarily difficult to decide whether any field identification of an isolated bird in winter quarters is completely beyond doubt. Much must depend on the ability of the observer to decide the

degree of variation of head and bill and other characters, but it is debatable to what extent such a decision is valid without previous experience of these birds in places where they are much more common than they are in London. The observer of the March bird recorded below makes no claim as to species, but three of the four observers who saw the bird on Jan. 17 are convinced that it was an Iceland. These observers are well known as being experienced and careful, and they had the advantage of seeing the bird under the best conditions.

T Hammersmith Bridge, an immature, probably third winter, on Jan. 17 was distinct from the Glaucous Gull seen on the same day at Barnes Bridge, both in size and age. The observers (R.W.H.N., C.E.L., R.H.M.R., A.G.G.T.) agree that it was slightly smaller than Herring Gulls, was noticeably sligher in head and bill, and had a wing projection at rest of about an inch beyond the tail, giving it a sleek, elongated appearance. In flight, however, the wings were comparatively broad and the carpal angle barely discernible. (Very full details of this and a number of other examples in various years are retained in the Society's files). London Bridge, an immature on Mar. 15 was about the size of a Herring Gull but only Common and Black-headed Gulls were present for direct comparison (L.R.E.):

#### 493 Arctic Skua

M Staines Res., an adult of the dark phase on Apr. 24 chased Black-headed Gulls and came close enough for the elongated central tail feathers to be seen (H.A.C., C.H.S.).

#### 496 Razorbill

E Walthamstow Res., four on Oct. 5 (W.A.W.).

M/S. Thames at Westminster and Lambeth, seven on the water on Oct. 5 eventually flew up river at a height of 40-50 feet; at least two were immature (W.G.T.). Kensington Gardens, one immature which was present on the Round Pond from Oct. 6 to 18 was frequently watched catching small fish and occasionally was seen on the bank; no signs of oiling were visible (G.C.L., W.G.T. *et al.*). These are the first records for the London Area since 1938.

[Hammersmith Bridge, a bird imperfectly seen in the failing light of the evening of Oct. 5 was evidently an auk and very probably a Razorbill (C.H.F.P.).]

#### 504 Corn-Crake

S Headley, one calling on June 26 (A.W.R.).

#### 509 Water-Rail

E Barking, one on ice at Mayesbrook Park G.P. on Dec. 25 (H.E.A.). Rainham, one heard at Berwick Pond on Aug. 7 and two on Dec. 25 and 28 (M.J.A., W.G.T.).

H Rickmansworth, one at Mill End on Mar. 13 (J.A.B.).

- M Staines Moor, one on Nov. 27, 28, Dec. 5 and 21; one found dead on Dec. 4 (C.H.S., R.E.S., C.A.W.). One was found dead to the north of King George VI Res. on Mar. 7 (R.dac., E.G.P.).
- K Crayford Creek, one heard on July 10 (W.I.B.). Ruxley G.P., two regularly seen during February and March, two on Oct. 10 and three on Dec. 25 (J.F.B., F.J.H., D.F.O.).
- S Barn Elms Res., one on Dec. 20 (W.R.P.). Fetcham mill pond, one on Nov. 21 (H.B.). Richmond Park, one on Feb. 15 (D.A.R.)

### 517 Pheasant

- E Hornchurch, pair nested in April in large garden in residential area (E.S.H.).

### 519 Red-legged Partridge

- B Iver, one on May 8 (A.V.T.).
- E Chingford, one on Mar. 3 and July 10 (W.A.W.).
- H Colney Street, a small covey at Old Parkbury G.P. on Mar. 14 (D.N.W.).
- M Bushy Park, one on June 23 (E.W.P.). Heathrow-Poyle-Staines-Ashford district, up to five regularly seen and at least two pairs known to have nested (P.J.Hn., B.A.R., C.A.W.).
- K Dartford Marshes, three on May 19, Aug. 27 and Dec. 27 (G.B., W.I.B., D.F.O.). Joyce Green, five on Nov. 7 (W.I.B.). Longfield, four on Apr. 11 (W.I.B.). Near Petts Wood, five on Dec. 23 (J.M.C.).
- S Beddington S.F., two adults and three young on Aug. 25 (C.J.O.H.). Esher, a pair on Apr. 24 (K.P.K., J.A.W.). Molesey, two on Feb. 14 (P.W.E.C.). Walton Heath, a pair on May 17 (H.B.). On June 23 one was found in Mortlake Road, taken to Kew Gardens and released (J.C.).

### ERRATA

The Hamper Mill, Hertfordshire, records for Scaup, Goldeneye and Smew published in the *L.B.R.* for 1946 refer in fact to 1947.

## On Sending in Records

THE Recordors welcome notes on London birds from members and non-members alike, and will be pleased to send particulars of our annual programme of recording and field work on request.

*Acting Recorder for  
North of the Thames.*

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Rickmansworth, Herts.

*Recorder for  
South of the Thames.*

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Beckenham, Kent.

A new map of the Society's Area may be obtained from the General Secretary, price 1/-.

# Black Redstarts in the London Area 1948

By P. W. E. CURRIE

INTRODUCTION: Black Redstarts have now bred for seven successive years in the City. In 1948 eight pairs are known to have done so, and in addition one pair bred in Westminster School, where Black Redstarts bred in 1940 and 1941.

One feature of this year's records is that the great majority of the breeding males were in first summer plumage, in which, as the *Hand-book* points out (Vol. 2, page 183), they are scarcely distinguishable from females. Indeed the only definite record of an adult male breeding is from one pair at Cripplegate: two other adult males were present in the area but are not known to have bred. It is clear, therefore, that, unless two birds are definitely seen, observers should be cautious about recording a pair of Black Redstarts if song is heard and an apparent female is seen.

## SUMMARY OF BREEDING RECORDS:

I. *Westminster*: a pair reared one brood which left the nest on June 7th: there is no record of a second brood (D.C.P., K.V.E., J.E.M., E.R.P.).

II. *Fetter Lane*: three broods known to have been reared, probably by two pairs: (a) Bartlett's Passage, young fledged May 19th or 20th, (b) Norwich Street, young fledged probably first week in July. This was thought to be the second brood of the Bartlett's Passage pair. (c) Wine Office Court, young fledged probably June 3rd (F.J.H., E.H.W., T.G.).

III. *Cannon Street, Watling Street*: young fledged before June 28th. A pair was seen in the same area feeding young about a week out of the nest on Aug. 9th and 10th. This perhaps represents a second brood of the same pair (S.D.H., E.H.M.).

IV. *Cripplegate Area*: (a) Jewin Crescent: two broods, the first of three young only, of which two young left nest May 22nd, one stayed until May 24th; the second brood fledged in the first week of July (S.D.H., M.D.E., P.W.E.C.).

(b) London Wall, Aldermanbury: breeding in this area is certain, although no nest was ever found, owing to the inaccessibility of the building in which it was sited. Two broods, the first fledged by May 20th, the second fledged between 29th June and 1st July (S.D.H., A.F.K., P.W.E.C., E.H.M.).

(c) London Wall, Fore Street: a pair feeding young not more than 3 days old, Aug. 10th. The male of this pair was immature, while that of the Aldermanbury pair was an adult, with conspicuous white wing patches (S.D.H.).

(d) Bridgewater Square. Only one brood known, fledged about the end of May (S.D.H., M.D.E., P.W.E.C.).

V. *Billiter Square*: one brood, fledged July 9th or 10th. Although a pair was seen in the area in late May, there is no evidence of an earlier brood (R.W.S., C.D., A.F.K.).

#### NON-BREEDING RECORDS :

Inner London: a large number of unmated males, most of which were in immature plumage, seem to have taken up territories all over London, in many cases outside the present breeding range of the species. These records are too numerous to give in detail. They include the following: South Kensington, Natural History Museum, May 7th-June 26th (G.C.L., D.F.O., R.W.H.); Victoria and Albert Museum, June 7th-9th (D.F.O.); Kensington High Street Station, May 24th-31st (C.H.); Hobart House, Wilton Street, May 6th-June 22nd (P.W.E.C.); Oxford Street, June 3rd; Portland Place, May 2nd (J.N.H.); Caxton Hall and St James's Park Underground Station, May 20th-July 2nd (C.H., K.V.E., D.C.P., G.T., T.L.B.); Gray's Inn, Holborn, April 6th-20th (L.R.W.); Law Courts, Strand, June 21st (J.S.W.); Fetter Lane, one or more on many dates (E.W.H., F.J.H., T.G.); Paternoster Row, April 9th-May 29th (C.W.-S., P.W.E.C.); several in the area round and to the North of St Paul's (many observers); Walbrook, April 16th-Oct. 6th (F.J.H., E.H.M., P.W.E.C.); Cripplegate area, several, including one adult male in the area between Moorgate and Whitbread's Brewery throughout the breeding season, and another in the area of Falcon Square (a female was also seen occasionally, but there is no clear evidence of breeding) (S.D.H., P.W.E.C.); Eastcheap, Mark Lane, April 14th-Sept. 18th (several juveniles seen in this area in autumn, but no evidence of breeding) (D.V.F., R.W.S.); Minories, June 7th and 9th (C.A.W.).

Outer London: *Surrey*: Oxshott, March 19th, a male (J.S.), Putney Vale allotments, March 27th, a female (R.W.H.); Barn Elms, a pair seen and song heard, April 14th (D.A.T.M.), a male seen by the reservoirs June 24th (R.G.S.), a male and a female on various dates Oct. 8th to Nov. 9th (E.G.P., R.S.B., R.H.M.R., J.A.); Lonsdale Road Res., a female Oct. 30th, 31st (C.E.L., R.W.H.); near Hammersmith Bridge, Oct. 31st (J.A.); Belmont, March 25th, 26th, a female or juvenile male (P.W.E.C.).

*Middlesex*: Hampton Court, March 26th, one female or immature male (M.J.M.); Stanmore, April 24th, a male (E.H.W.); St John's Wood, June 25th, a male singing (R.H.M.R.).

I have to thank particularly Mr S. D. Herington for his valuable notes on the Cripplegate and Watling Street birds, and Mr F. J. Holroyde, Professor E. H. Warmington and Mr T. Gascoigne for information about Fetter Lane. In addition to those whose initials appear after the records given above, and to those who took part in the Cripplegate survey of the Ecological Section, whose records were communicated verbally, thanks are due to the many other observers who have sent in notes; these have been entered on the record cards but owing to lack of space they cannot be published in detail.



# The Census of Great Crested Grebes 1948

Report by E. R. PARRINDER.

IN June 1948, members of the Ornithological Section made a count of Great Crested Grebes (*Podiceps c. cristatus*) at the gravel pits, lakes and reservoirs in the London Area. A similar count was made in the summers of 1946 and 1947, as part of the sample census organised by the British Trust for Ornithology, and in each year a large team of observers visited nearly 200 waters. It is intended to carry out the census annually for a ten year period.

The main purpose of the enquiry is to study fluctuations in the numbers of Grebes, and it is not proposed to analyse the data in detail until the end of the ten years. Nevertheless, the first three years include the 1946-47 cold spell, and the figures for these years give an interesting indication of the effect of prolonged hard weather and the speed with which the species may recover its numbers.

In 1948 a total of 381 Great Crested Grebes was counted in the London Area. In the table below the figures for certain waters not visited in each of the three years have been excluded, and the table thus shows comparable totals and not the complete census figures for each year.

	Total Adults		
	1946	1947	1948
Bucks. ... ..	27	21	32
Essex ... ..	18	12	11
Herts. ... ..	56	41	65
Kent ... ..	7	2	3
Middlesex ... ..	111	104	137
Surrey ... ..	59	48	52
	278	228	300

The results of the census in 1946 showed that the summer population of Great Crested Grebes in the London Area had increased by over 50% since the first count in 1931, and it can be assumed that this was largely due to the great increase in the number of gravel pits, especially during the war years. In 1947, following on the very cold weather early in the year, the numbers of Grebes decreased sharply by 18%. The results of the 1948 census show that, in the London Area, Great Crested Grebes have not only recovered from the decline of 1947 but the numbers are actually higher by 8% than in the previous peak year of 1946.

The same trend is apparent in the figures for the other sample areas, but the recovery in the London Area appears to have been more complete.

Observers were asked to distinguish, if possible, between breeding and non-breeding birds. The number of breeding pairs reported in 1948 was 57, as against 63 in 1947. It would be dangerous to place too much reliance on these figures as most of the pits were only visited once and at many it is difficult to be certain if the birds are breeding or not (*cf. L.B.R. for 1947, p. 36*). Nevertheless, there is a strong indication

that non-breeding birds formed a very high proportion of the big increase in the total numbers of adults present in 1948.

Thanks are due to all those, too numerous to mention individually, who carried out the census. We hope that the results will encourage them to take part again next season.

## The Gravel Pits Enquiry

**B**EFORE the war many sand and gravel pits were dug in the valleys of the Thames, Colne and Lea to provide materials for the growth of London. The process was greatly accelerated during the war, when vast quantities of material were needed for aerodromes, and there are now nearly two hundred pits in the London Area.

The influence on bird-life has been considerable. The flooding of each pit, and the growth of marsh-like vegetation, has introduced aquatic breeding species such as Moorhens, Coots, Dabchicks, Great Crested Grebes, Mallard, Tufted Ducks and Pochard, together with Sedge-Warblers, Reed-Warblers, and Reed-Buntings. Yellow Wagtails, Whinchats, Redshank, and Snipe breed at many of the pits. One of Britain's rarest birds, the Little Ringed Plover, has nested at a few where conditions are particularly suitable.

In 1948 the Ornithological Section decided to make an ecological survey of selected pits, and chose four in varying stages of development. The aim is to study intensively the bird communities at each pit, in relation to the birds of the surrounding countryside and to the changes at the pit itself. There are stages in the development of a gravel pit and the bird-life of a newly-excavated pit may be very different from that of one which is disused and over-grown. It is also hoped to study the influence of the pits as feeding and resting, and possibly roosting, places for birds nesting outside its confines, for migrant birds and for winter flocks of ducks and other species.

It is intended that the enquiry should last for two or three years, and a detailed report will not be published until the work is further advanced.

The organisers at the four pits have prepared interim reports which show that the first year's work has been extremely valuable. One of the pits, at Mayesbrook Park in Essex, has now been converted into a public boating lake, and, most unfortunately, the survey there will have to be discontinued. At the other pits, however, there is still much to be done and Miss N. Goom (pit at East Bedfont, Middlesex), Mr W. D. Melliush (Moor Mill, Herts), and Mr K. P. Keywood (pits south of Walton Res., Surrey) would be very glad to receive offers of help, especially if regular weekly or fortnightly visits can be made.

Full details of the enquiry were printed in the Recording Circular for 1948; copies and further information may be obtained from E. R. Parrinder, 27 Gwalior House, Chase Road, Southgate, N.14.

Notes from other gravel pits, especially breeding records, would be welcomed but should be sent to the Recorders in the usual way.

# The Birds of Kensington Gardens and Regent's Park

By S. CRAMP

## 1. INTRODUCTION.

THE parks of Inner London form an important biological habitat, nearly 1200 acres of gardens, parkland and open water in the centre of the greatest urban agglomeration in the world. Little more than a century ago there were green fields within easy flying distance of the outer parks, but now they are cut off from the open country by a belt of wholly or mainly built-up land extending for ten miles or more in most directions. As the open country receded many species of birds disappeared from the parks, a few managed to retain a foothold in this man-dominated area, and a still smaller number came in to carve new ecological niches for themselves. The parks differ considerably in size and character; this paper attempts to study the bird ecology of the two outermost ones. Kensington Gardens (275 acres) consist for the most part of open woodland, with a wide variety of trees but little or no undergrowth, two areas of open water, the Round Pond and the Long Water, and some gardens and flower walks, but few enclosures. They adjoin directly on the larger Hyde Park, and the grounds of Holland House, an important sanctuary for birds, are only a short distance to the west. Regent's Park is larger (410 acres) and of a different character, for a much greater proportion is devoted to gardens and flower walks, while the open parkland, forming over half the total area, has only scattered trees in most parts. There are more enclosures, though the fences of some of these disappeared during the war and have not yet been renewed. There is a large lake and the Regent's Canal runs along the northern boundary. The Zoological Gardens occupying 34 acres in the northern part of the park are not included in the results.

## 2. METHOD AND RESULTS.

Both parks were visited at intervals of roughly a week between October, 1946, and September, 1947, and lists were kept of the birds seen on each visit. The breeding records refer therefore to 1947, when conditions had returned to normal after the war-time disturbances which affected particularly Regent's Park. I have been able to confirm and amplify my own observations with information supplied by the Official Recorders for the two parks (Miss E. McEwen and Mr W. G. Teagle for Kensington Gardens and Mr E. C. Watt for Regent's Park), for whose ready assistance I am deeply grateful. The results may be summarised as follows:—

a. *Present all year.*

<i>Kensington Gardens</i>		<i>Regent's Park.</i>	
Carrion-Crow (3) .....	B.	Carrion-Crow .....	pB.
Jackdaw (5) .....	fB.	—	
Jay (11) .....	B.	—	
Starling (14) .....	B.	Starling .....	B.
House-Sparrow (61) .....	B.	House-Sparrow .....	B.
Tree-Creeper (93) .....	B.	—	
Great Tit (98) .....	B.	Great Tit .....	B.
Blue Tit (100) .....	B.	Blue Tit .....	B.
Coal Tit (102) .....	B.	—	
Mistle-Thrush (174) .....	fB.	Mistle-Thrush .....	B.
Blackbird (184) .....	B.	Blackbird .....	B.
Robin (203) .....	B.	Robin .....	B.
Great Spotted Woodpecker (237) .....	B.	—	
Tawny Owl (253) .....	pB.	Tawny Owl .....	pB.
Mute Swan (302) .....	fB.	Mute Swan .....	fB.
Mallard (317) .....	B.	Mallard .....	B.
Tufted Duck (330) .....	—	Tufted Duck .....	—
Wood-Pigeon (380) .....	B.	Wood-Pigeon .....	B.
Stock-Dove (381) .....	B.	—	
Moorhen (510) .....	B.	Moorhen .....	B.

B=bred.

fB=attempted to breed, but unsuccessful.

pB=probably bred.

The numbers in brackets following the names of the species refer to Witherby's *Check-List of British Birds* (1941), where the scientific names will be found.

*Notes.*

*Jackdaw.* W. H. Hudson (8) states that there were about two dozen birds present in 1898, some breeding in hollow elms in Kensington Gardens, others in trees in Hyde Park. Although as many as 20 birds were seen on one occasion in 1947 the normal breeding population is probably much smaller. Birds were seen carrying nesting material, but no completed nests were found or young seen.

*Tufted Duck.* This species is mainly a winter visitor but small numbers may be found in both parks during the summer months. A pair nested in Regent's Park in 1944 (2).

b. *Present all year but less common in winter.*

<i>Kensington Gardens.</i>		<i>Regent's Park.</i>	
Greenfinch (19) .....	B.	Greenfinch .....	B.
Chaffinch (41) .....	B.	Chaffinch .....	B.
Song-Thrush (175) .....	B.	Song-Thrush .....	B.
Hedge-Sparrow (211) .....	B.	Hedge-Sparrow .....	pB.
Wren (213) .....	pB.	Wren .....	pB.

c. *Summer Residents.*

<i>Kensington Gardens.</i>		<i>Regent's Park.</i>	
—		Pied Wagtail (90) .....	—
Spotted Flycatcher (121) .....	B.	Spotted Flycatcher .....	B.
Swift (225) .....	—	Swift .....	—

*Pied Wagtail.* Present in April and May 1947 in Regent's Park but no signs of breeding observed. Young were seen at the same place in 1946. A frequent winter visitor to Kensington Gardens.

*Spotted Flycatcher.* An old-established resident in Kensington Gardens. Six nests were found in 1947, probably a large increase, as the previous highest figure appears to have been two pairs. One pair only in Regent's Park.

*Swift.* Frequently seen hawking over the lakes in both parks, but the nearest breeding places are Hammersmith and Kilburn.

d. *Resident or frequent in winter.*

Pied Wagtail (90).	—
Heron (289).	Heron.
Pochard (328).	Pochard.
Black-headed Gull (478).	Black-headed Gull.
Common Gull (481).	Common Gull.
Herring-Gull (482).	—
Coot (511).	Coot.

*Coot.* This species is resident in St James's Park, and it is rather surprising that it does not breed regularly in the railed-off portion of the Long Water, where two pairs bred in 1937, the first recorded hatching. The protected portion of the lake in Regent's Park is probably too narrow for breeding purposes.

*Heron.* Most frequently seen in autumn and early winter.

e. *Passage migrants and occasional visitors.*

Both parks are visited by many species during the spring and autumn migration, and the list of occasional visitors is even more extensive. They are not of primary importance for the purposes of this enquiry, and full details can be found elsewhere (1), (2).

3. COMPARISON OF THE TWO PARKS.

The details given above of the bird population of the two parks (excluding passage migrants and occasional visitors) in 1946-7 may be summarised as follows:—

	Kensington Gardens.	Regent's Park.
Bred .....	20	14
Probably bred .....	2	4
Attempted to breed .....	3	1
	—	—
Total .....	25	19
Not breeding .....	9	8
	—	—
Total species .....	34	27
	—	—

Thus Regent's Park has not so varied an avifauna as Kensington Gardens, the difference being most noticeable in the breeding populations. All the birds breeding or attempting to breed in Regent's Park are found in Kensington Gardens, while the latter have in addition the following six species—jackdaw, jay, tree-creeper, coal tit, great spotted woodpecker and stock-dove. The jackdaws of Kensington Gardens are

rather a special case, a historical survival, though these "somewhat depressed and sedentary Kensington birds," as W. H. Hudson described them fifty years ago (8), are hanging on more successfully than might have been expected. The jay has been present and probably breeding in Kensington Gardens since 1941, but is now rare in Regent's Park, although it occurred there in 1934-35 (10), (12). The coal tit seems to have only recently returned to breed in Kensington Gardens, and there was probably only a single pair in 1947. For the remaining species the main reason for the differences between the two parks would seem to be the more numerous and closely planted trees of Kensington Gardens, for the tree-creeper and the great spotted woodpecker are purely woodland species, and the stock-dove, though found in various habitats, is often associated with woods and parklands. The more open grassland in Regent's Park is too subject to human interference to allow its normal population of ground nesting birds to breed; it is interesting to note that during the war years, when these areas were closed to the public, yellow wagtails (88) bred for four years, and skylarks (70) were plentiful (Mr E. C. Watt, *in litt*).

The differences in the non-breeding populations were slight. The numbers of all kinds of ducks and gulls found in Kensington Gardens are considerably greater than in Regent's Park, where they are more disturbed by boaters. The herring-gull, a fairly frequent visitor to the Round Pond in very small numbers, is rarely seen in Regent's Park.

#### 4. ECOLOGICAL FACTORS IN THE TWO PARKS.

The nineteen species common to the breeding population of the two parks are, with the exception of the carrion-crow and the wood-pigeon, which have taken advantage of the tolerance extended to them by human beings in inner London, and the three water species (mute swan, mallard, and moorhen), members of the normal garden association of birds (7). In fact, there are only two regular members of the garden association which are not found, the swift and the house-martin. The swift uses the parks for feeding, though its nearest known breeding places are two miles away. The house-martin is rarely seen except during migration, and the nearest breeding colony is a small one at Hammersmith. The house-martin, though not uncommon in some suburban areas, has vanished from the closely-built centres of large towns, for reasons which are not entirely clear (3). The birds found in the garden association are those which are able to adapt themselves to the presence of human beings, to stand the noise and disturbance, especially at nesting time, without becoming too confiding for their own safety, and so are able to take advantage of the food supplied voluntarily and involuntarily by man. This is clearly the first factor controlling the breeding population of the parks, although it is not easy to be certain that it is a limiting factor in the case of a given species, when it is remembered how the wood-pigeon and moorhen, still extremely wary in their normal haunts, have become accustomed to urban life, exhibiting a tameness that would have astounded the naturalists of a century ago. Again, as Huxley (9) has shown, geographical differences

in tameness may be found in a species, such as the robin and moorhen.

The second factor is the food supply, which reflects the specialised feature of the habitat in several ways. The constant trampling interferes with the growth of the normal shrubs and larger flowering plants, producing a sward of specialised grasses and low-growing herbs which can resist such treatment. Insect life is affected both by the disturbance and the changed flora. The sooty atmosphere of central London is also unfavourable to some species of plants and insects; Fitter (7) suggests that the sooting over of the trees may have been responsible for the disappearance of the nuthatch, which Yarrell recorded as breeding in Kensington Gardens in 1843. On the other hand, human beings have added substantially to the food supply in the parks by bringing bread, especially in the winter months, and many species have learned to take this new food, some (the coot, for example) even feeding it to their young. The loss of suitable open country for feeding is mainly responsible for the disappearance of the rook from central London and for the weakened hold of the jackdaw. Nevertheless, it seems probable that in many cases food is not the limiting factor and that existing supplies would permit both more species and more individual birds than are found at present in the breeding season.

This brings us to the third factor, nesting sites. Suitable sites, out of the reach of small boys and the high cat population of inner London, are almost restricted to tall trees and buildings, or bushes and evergreens in the enclosures. So, of the twenty-five species in the two parks which bred, or attempted to breed, fourteen (carrion-crow, jackdaw, jay, starling, house-sparrow, tree-creeper, great tit, blue tit, spotted flycatcher, mistle-thrush, great spotted woodpecker, tawny owl, woodpigeon, and stock-dove), normally breed in trees or buildings, and five (greenfinch, chaffinch, song-thrush, blackbird, and hedge-sparrow) in hedgerows, evergreens, or bushes. (There is a clear tendency for both the blackbird and song-thrush in the parks to build at a greater height than normally; occasional low nests quickly come to grief.) Of the remaining six species, the robin and the wren breed in a variety of sites, leaving only four birds which nest on or near the ground—the coal-tit, mute swan, mallard and moorhen. The coal-tit usually chooses a fairly inaccessible hole in a tree or wall; the mute swan can deal with most intruders, and the moorhen prefers an island, or as on the Long Water, a site among the bushes by the water's edge which is not easily reached. The mallard normally nests on the ground, only occasionally using trees, but in these parks the reverse is true, most nests being in holes in trees at a good height from the ground; a practice which is at least fifty years old (Hudson (8)). Apart from these special exceptions, there are no species in either of the parks which normally nest on the ground or in low cover. Lack of suitable nesting sites would here appear to be the decisive factor, rather than insufficient food. Thus, as has been mentioned, yellow wagtails bred in Regent's Park during the war when not subject to interference, and skylarks were plentiful; both are rare now.

The warblers are a case in point. In Regent's Park willow-warblers (132) and chiffchaffs (129) were heard several times in the spring of 1947, whilst in Kensington Gardens, where the sheepfold provided a plentiful supply of insect food, close to an enclosure with suitable song-posts, the willow-warbler was present between March 31 and May 16, and the blackcap (162) from May 15 to May 27; whilst the chiffchaff, common whitethroat (163) and lesser whitethroat (164) were also observed (Mr W. G. Teagle, *in litt.*). Yet none of these bred. The spotted flycatcher, whose food is largely similar to these warblers, provided six pairs in Kensington Gardens and one in Regent's Park, but whereas these nests were all in trees the warblers require thick low cover, or, in some cases, bushes.

The list of breeding birds shows a surprising variety in view of the specialised nature of the habitat, but the numerical strength of the bird population is not as great as this might suggest. It was not possible to carry out an accurate breeding census as most of the nests tend to be found within the enclosed portions, but an estimate can be made which is reliable within fairly wide limits. Many species are probably not represented by more than one or two pairs in each park—e.g., carrion-crow, tree-creeper, coal-tit, wren, great spotted woodpecker, tawny owl, mute swan and moorhen, whilst only a handful (starling, house-sparrow, blackbird, and perhaps the song-thrush) are likely to number more than twenty pairs. On this rough basis it is believed that somewhere between 120 and 170 *pairs* bred in Kensington Gardens in 1947, and between 130 and 180 pairs in Regent's Park, giving approximate densities of between 9 and 12 *birds* per 10 acres in the former, and between 6 and 9 birds per 10 acres in the latter. These are very low. Fisher (6) estimates that an average approximate breeding density for parkland is 100 birds per 10 acres, for deciduous woodland 40 and for permanent grassland 20. These figures present a somewhat misleading picture, however, for two of the commonest birds of the parks, the starling and house-sparrow, nest mainly in buildings outside the parks, though a few breed in trees and buildings within. The house-sparrows seen in the parks usually nest within the fairly immediate neighbourhood, but the starlings may breed much further away, up to two miles in the case of a pair observed by Hudson (8). The density of the birds feeding in the parks is, therefore, much higher than the breeding density.

Elton (5), in a survey of 55 animal communities from a wide range of habitats, found a rather constant and high percentage of genera with only one species present, the average being 86%, while the average number of species per genus was 1.38. On the basis of the breeding birds of the two parks the comparable figures are 78% and 1.38 for Kensington Gardens, and 87% and 1.18 for Regent's Park respectively, showing that these two specialised habitats do not differ significantly from the general tendency in this respect.

The numbers in winter are much greater. E. M. Nicholson (11) made a census of Kensington Gardens in November, 1925, and found a total of 3980 birds, an average density of 144.7 birds per 10 acres. If the two most numerous species (the house-sparrow and the starling, with 2603



and 411 individuals respectively) are excluded, the average density is still more than 35 birds per 10 acres, compared with an estimated density in the 1947 breeding season of between 7 and 10 birds per 10 acres when these two species are similarly excluded. Nicholson found that the next most numerous species were black-headed gulls, wood-pigeons, mallard, blue-tits, and moorhens (with 289, 241, 240, 37 and 26 respectively). The first of these is absent in the breeding season, and the others all increase in numbers during the winter months. Regular counts were made at the Round Pond in 1946-47 and these showed a maximum of 624 birds on January 16, 1947—a density of nearly 900 birds per 10 acres. This figure included 475 black-headed gulls, 16 common gulls, 4 herring-gulls, 40 mallard, 55 tufted duck, 21 mute swans, 8 pochard and 5 coot, compared with a summer minimum of only 42 birds on May 28, 1947, made up of 23 mute swans, 16 mallard, and 3 tufted duck. Although the numbers of most breeding species are increased in the winter months and several new species arrive, three species (the song-thrush, hedge-sparrow and wren), of which the majority of individuals are sedentary in southern England, are practically absent from the parks from October to February, whilst the stock-dove is missing from Kensington Gardens on many occasions during the same period.

##### 5. SOME CHANGES DURING THE LAST FIFTY YEARS.

W. H. Hudson (8) has given an account of the bird life in these two parks in 1897, exactly fifty years prior to the present enquiry. He painted a picture of the general decline in the variety and interest of the birds of central London as the surrounding ring of built-up areas steadily thickened, though he was able to report the arrival in the preceding twenty years of three new breeding species (wood-pigeon, little grebe and moorhen) and the more recent winter invasion of the black-headed gulls. Since he wrote, an enormous expansion of the built-up land has taken place until now the sprawling mass of London is more than doubled, and it is interesting to see in what further ways the bird life of these parks has changed. A further deterioration might be expected but, at least in the case of Kensington Gardens, this has not happened. Six species which bred or probably bred in 1947 did not breed in 1897—jay, greenfinch, tree-creeper, great tit, mistle-thrush and great spotted woodpecker, and two others can probably be added to the list—the carrion-crow which, though a frequent visitor in Hudson's time, is not mentioned by him as breeding, and the stock-dove, which he described as a newcomer which might possibly be resident. It should be stressed again that a number of species are only represented by one or two breeding pairs, so that the breeding list will vary somewhat from year to year, and a comparison of any two given years may be misleading. Thus Hudson pointed out that four of the above species (tree-creeper, great tit, mistle-thrush, and great spotted woodpecker) had only recently vanished from the park when he wrote, whilst Dixon (4) writing in 1909, twelve years later, recorded both the great tit and carrion-crow as breeding, described the greenfinch as a regular nester in many of the urban parks, and stated that he had often seen the tree-

creeper in Kensington Gardens, though possibly it did not breed there. Again, within recent years (1939-47) the tree-creeper has only been recorded as breeding in 1945 and 1947, and the great spotted woodpecker and probably the stock-dove do not breed every year. Nevertheless, the general trend is heartening. In the last fifty years there have been two definite losses—the barn-owl (which was probably reduced to a single pair in 1897) and the little grebe, a recent colonist in Hudson's time which has since declined in all the central area, and is now only an occasional visitor to Kensington Gardens, though it nests from time to time in St James's Park. The remaining sixteen species were present in both 1897 and 1947. Some species that Hudson believed to be holding on precariously (e.g., chaffinch, blue tit, coal-tit and wren) are still present, with numbers little, if at all, increased. Both the blackbird and the song-thrush, however, have certainly increased, for he stated that there were not more than two dozen of these two species in all the central parks (Kensington Gardens, Hyde Park, Green Park and St James's Park), whilst in 1947 there were certainly more than double this number in Kensington Gardens alone. The spotted flycatcher has increased from one pair in 1897 to six in 1947, though this is a recent and perhaps temporary rise.

Hudson's account of the birds of Regent's Park is unfortunately less detailed. He states that the species to be found then were the green-finch, chaffinch, blackbird, song-thrush, hedge-sparrow, robin, wren, wood-pigeon, little grebe and moorhen, to which "in summer two or three migrants are added." We may assume that the house-sparrow and starling bred then, but it is difficult to believe that all the other species on the 1947 list (spotted flycatcher, great tit, blue tit, mistle-thrush, tawny owl, mute swan and mallard) represent gains since that time, even though he adds that birds in this park were not encouraged then, and their eggs and young were menaced by human beings and cats. Dixon (4) in 1909 describes the spotted flycatcher as breeding, adding that the mistle-thrush was stated to breed, though he had no definite proof. A certain gain is the carrion-crow, which was only a visitor in 1897. Definite losses are the little grebe, which nested then, but seldom succeeded in hatching out its eggs, and the magpie, represented by three birds in Hudson's day. They were probably escapes, and though they built nests once or twice none of the eggs hatched. The reference to the summer migrants is tantalisingly vague, but as the only breeding summer migrant now is the spotted flycatcher, there has certainly been some loss, probably one or more of the warblers. The final picture is far from exact, but the general trend is not so encouraging as that for Kensington Gardens.

## 6. SUMMARY.

1. A series of regular visits to the two parks between October, 1946, and September, 1949, showed that 25 species bred, probably bred, or attempted to breed in Kensington Gardens and 19 in Regent's Park, whilst 9 and 8 non-breeding species respectively were present for considerable periods of the year.

2. The difference in the breeding species of the two parks is considered to be due mainly to the more numerous trees of Kensington Gardens attracting a number of woodland species, whilst the open grassland of Regent's Park was too subject to human interference to allow its normal population of ground nesting birds to breed.

3. The three main ecological factors were the presence of human beings in large numbers, food supply and nesting sites. It is argued that the lack of suitable nesting sites probably acted as the limiting factor in the case of several potential breeding species.

4. The estimated breeding densities of approximately 9-12 birds per 10 acres for Kensington Gardens and 6-9 birds per 10 acres for Regent's Park are very low, but large numbers of house-sparrows and starlings feed in the parks whilst nesting outside. The populations are considerably increased in winter.

5. The breeding species in the parks probably vary somewhat from year to year, but there appears to have been an increase in breeding species in Kensington Gardens in the last fifty years. The position in Regent's Park is less clear, but the increase is smaller.

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# Winter Duck Population of the London Area

By R. C. HOMES

## INTRODUCTION

THE object of this paper is to provide an interim report on the winter census of ducks in the London Area before and since the war. Certain changes are apparent compared with fifteen or twenty years ago, but definite conclusions for the last ten years are prevented by the shortage of information during the war. None the less, it seems useful at this stage to give a tentative review of the winter status of the more regular species of ducks around London, and for this purpose the ordinary annual records of the Society have been taken into account as well as the results of the census. Some forty observers have taken part in the counts, and full acknowledgment is due for their persistence, often under extremely unfavourable weather conditions.

As frequent reference is made to the Area studied, it should be made clear that this is a circle of 20 miles radius from St Paul's Cathedral.

The aims of the study of winter duck populations in the London Area are as follows:—

- (1) A comparison of the total population from year to year with the eventual object of putting on record any long-term trends that may become apparent.
- (2) A description of the normal pattern of migration throughout the area.
- (3) A study of the habitat preference as between the different types of reservoir or other sheets of water.
- (4) A study of the sex ratio and of any facts that may emerge regarding separate migration or different wintering habits of the sexes.

This paper is concerned chiefly with the first of these problems and is based on results up to January 1st, 1949, though the available figures from the census are as yet far too few to justify in themselves any deductions on trends or even any very definite description of the average winter population. The various problems are so interwoven that some reference to the other aspects is inevitable, but at this stage discussion in detail is not attempted. No reference is made to the rarer and more irregular visitors.

## ORGANISATION.

As an experiment, the first winter census of ducks in the Area was made on December 18th, 1937, though, to simplify the task, mallard were excluded. The results, which showed that the undertaking was feasible, were published in the London Bird Report for that year (1). In the following winter, counts, including mallard, were made on one Saturday a month from October to March inclusive at all the more im-

portant sheets of water within 20 miles of London. Further censuses were prevented by the war, which was also responsible for the 1938-39 results not appearing until 1942 (3). The totals for the various species were then put on record, and the sex ratios were discussed tentatively, conditions having prevented a proper search of the literature.

The census was resumed in the winter of 1947-48, mallard again being at first excluded. After several counts had been made, the International Wildfowl Inquiry announced a series of national census dates for 1948. These did not coincide with our own dates, and arrived too late to make it possible to arrange as complete a census as in our own original plan. The greater part of the Area, however, was covered on March 6th, April 24th, and July 10th, with the inclusion of mallard at the request of the I.W.I. For the winter of 1948-49 it was arranged to adopt the same dates as the I.W.I., and to conform to their other requirements. Wherever possible, however, the actual figures for the two sexes were obtained instead of percentages, with the object of reducing the element of estimate and facilitating comparisons of the totals.

#### WEATHER.

In the winter of 1938-39 the weather, in general, remained mild until the third count, on December 17th, when there was a change to strong easterly winds and freezing conditions, which persisted for just over a week, with snow on seven days between the 18th and 26th. By December 17th only teal seemed to have been affected and, because of a return to more normal weather before the next count, the census figures do not reflect the abnormally large numbers of many species that were present at the end of December. In consequence, the totals may prove to be fairly representative of a normal winter.

The first count in the winter of 1947-48 on November 15th came at the beginning of a short cold spell, which was accompanied by snow in the north of Scotland. Average temperature for the month in Scandinavia was 5° F. below normal, but in the London Area on the 15th it was 40°-45° F. Conditions on December 20th were dull, and such cold as there had been did not appear to have been sufficiently intense to account for any departure from the normal pattern of duck movements, though there was a marked increase of pochard in the area. Despite unsettled conditions and local snow in January there was no exceptionally severe spell during the rest of the winter, and the results should not have been abnormally influenced by weather.

In the first half of the winter 1948-49 fog prevented any census being made on November 27th, and conditions generally were mild.

#### RESULTS

The counts taken in the winter of 1947-48 and in the early part of the winter 1948-49 are shown on the accompanying table, to which reference will frequently be made under the various species. Comparison is also made with the 1938-39 census (3). The figures cover all

## LONDON AREA DUCK CENSUS—November 1947 to January 1949.

	Winter, 1947-48.			6. 3.48	20. 3.48	Spring. 24. 4.48 (+20 young) (+299 young)	Summer. 10. 7.48	Winter, 1948-49.		
	18.11.47	20.12.47	17. 1.48					14. 2.48	2.10.48	30.10.48
Mallard .....	—	—	—	1868 (2500)	—	627	995	3121	2680	2897
Gadwall .....	22	7	10	13	15	8	3	41	45	4
Teal .....	149	277	760	424	255	—	1	86	219	645
Wigeon .....	86	190	353	110	297	—	1	78	237	290
Shoveler .....	104	42	102	78	24	4	1	146	107	16
Common Pochard ....	987	2014	2722	1652	929 (1060)	213	89	214	591	1147
Tufted Duck .....	1710	2779	2609	2422	2177 (2650)	908	385	743	1327	2429
Goldeneye .....	4	2	20	4	27	7	—	—	3	59
Goosander .....	6	51	101	134	156	61	—	—	—	119
Snow .....	2	96	102	113	162	—	—	—	4	91

NOTES: 15.11.47. Figures do not include about 250 ducks on King George V Res.

6. 3.48. Lea Valley Reservoirs uncounted, but figures in brackets include interpolation for this group. Various of the smaller waters were not covered on this and the remaining dates up to July 10, but the total effect is not material.

2.10.48. } On a very few waters counts were done either a day before or after; as these were sites where the population is relatively sedentary, the results are considered valid.

30.10.48. }  
1. 1.49. Due to the bus strike some of the larger waters had to be counted on January 2nd. Figures should, therefore, be treated with caution, though it is thought that their value is not seriously affected.

the important sheets of water within 20 miles of London except St James's Park, but not those smaller lakes, ponds and gravel-pits which normally shelter only a few mallard.

**MALLARD.** *Anas p. platyrhynchos* L.

As the mallard was not included in the earlier part of the 1947-48 census, there are not yet many results available for comparison with the pre-war figures. The census of 1938-39 gave a winter population of approximately 3000 with very little fluctuation from the middle of October to the middle of February, and only a slight drop by the middle of March. As explained in the table, the actual number of 1868 counted on March 6th, 1948, did not include the Lea Valley reservoirs, and a corrected total would probably approximate to 2500. Comparison of results, however, requires considerable care, as it has not been possible to include all the smaller sheets of water in the later census, a source of discrepancy that is only appreciable in the case of this species, of which relatively large numbers may be found on small ponds that cannot always be readily visited. A comparison, confined to those sites visited in 1938-39 and again in 1948, shows that the 1948 figures are down by nearly 30 per cent., but as only two winters are involved, the decrease may well be a result of varying climatic conditions and should not at this stage be regarded as significant.

**GADWALL.** *Anas strepera* L.

The numbers of this species are too small for comparisons to be of much value, as birds frequently resort to the Thames, where they can easily be missed, and on the reservoirs they are often inconspicuous on a dull afternoon among larger numbers of mallard. Whereas the largest single flock recorded for the period 1936-48 inclusive has been one of 32 on three occasions in the years 1941-43, the maximum for the whole area in the census of 1947-48 amounted to only 22. Since, however, gadwall are practically confined to Barn Elms and the adjacent stretches of the Thames, and the birds of this locality are often found in a single flock, the difference is not so great as it appears.

**TEAL.** *Anas c. crecca* L.

A comparative study of teal populations in different years is complicated by the migratory movements, for not only may the time and extent of these vary from year to year, but the census dates themselves have not been the same in different years. These factors may be compensating or may equally well exaggerate any differences. For teal therefore, two years are an even more inadequate sample than for the preceding species. Taking into account partial results for other years, and allowing for additional gravel-pits visited in 1947 and 1948, there is no great difference between the peak for these years and the census of 1938-39.

In reviewing the figures in more detail it should be noted that the peak of 760 on January 17th in the winter of 1947-48 included a flock of over 400 at Staines. Earlier in the winter the largest numbers were

at Island Barn Reservoir, with 149 on December 20th, compared with only 3 at Staines on this date. In January a drop at Island Barn was matched by a corresponding increase at Walton, about a mile to the north-east, and the Staines flock was evidently the result of an influx from outside the area. By February 14th this flock had halved its size, while elsewhere there had again been a redistribution but little change in total numbers. Apart from the large flocks in these two areas, smaller parties in numbers of up to eighty are found at some of the older gravel-pits, where plenty of cover is provided by a growth of willows, e.g. Beddington and Moor Mill, Colney Street, and to a lesser extent Hamper Mill and Ruxley. This preference of the bigger flocks for large, bare sheets of water, and of the smaller parties for partly overgrown gravel-pits contrasts strongly with the scarcity of teal on waters of intermediate size. It is of interest in this connection that in the autumn of 1947 up to a hundred used to visit Berwick Pond at night to feed, presumably resting by day on the Thames, and so escaped inclusion in the census.

Though detailed discussion of migration is not intended, some reference is essential to understand the variations in numbers of this species. A study of ringing recoveries in the British Isles (4) has revealed three main peaks: in the second half of August, the second half of October, and again in November or December. On the Thames estuary there is immigration from the middle of August into September, again at the end of October or in early November, and thirdly in the second half of December. In the London Area the three October totals available give a maximum of 219, and the two November counts one of 368, whereas if we couple the January 1st figure shown on the table with the three December counts there is a lower limit of 521 and an upper of 853. Even allowing for year to year variations it is apparent that the December rise is the largest, as is also the case on the Thames estuary. Data for the second half of the winter are not yet sufficient to fix with any precision the average date of departure, but such figures as are available for March do not reach 300.

#### WIGEON. *Anas penelope* L.

Except for odd birds or small parties, wigeon occur regularly on very few sites, all of which have been visited regularly, so that slight variations in the waters visited in the various years do not involve the same source of error as for mallard.

In the most recent census a count of 337 on October 30th, 1948, compares with only 46 on October 22nd, 1938, but the figures for the earlier winter were unusually low, and there are not yet any grounds for considering that there has been a general increase in the Area.

In the winter of 1947-48 the rise from 190 on December 20th to 353 on January 17th corresponds to a greater proportional increase in teal and shoveler between these dates, and suggests a late southward or westward movement. Thus, in February the drop to only 110 is entirely accounted for by the disappearance of a large flock at Staines, leaving only similar numbers to those in December. The rise again on



March 6th is closely paralleled by events in other years, when a return passage movement has often been evident in the last week of February or early March.

The chief haunts are predominantly Queen Mary and Staines Reservoirs, despite a count at an intermediate date of 86 at Molesey on February 27th, 1948, but at that date the return passage would normally be in evidence. About the same time a party of twenty or so was seen at Ruxley gravel-pit. Up to ten were seen on various pits or small waters in Hertfordshire in the early months of 1948, and a small flock stayed at Brent Reservoir during January and February. Autumn passage was evidenced by a flock of about 150 at King George VI Reservoir on September 25th and 26th.

#### SHOVELER. *Spatula clypeata* (L.).

The maximum figures for shoveler shown on the accompanying table resemble those for teal and wigeon in being higher than for the corresponding time of year in the winter of 1938-39; at Staines, however, where anything from a half to the whole of the shoveler population of the London Area is normally to be found, their numbers have shown a marked upward trend for many years. A full review of this tendency is deferred until a later date.

Some knowledge of the migration of shoveler is essential to the understanding of the numbers of this species. Its chief winter quarters lie well to the south of the British Isles, and numbers consequently drop early in the winter, though sometimes a large flock may stay into December or January, when there may also be passage through the Area. For example, in early 1946 there was a sudden drop from a flock of 200-300 to a remnant of under ten, while in 1947 there were on December 20th less than half the number recorded on November 15th. An increase later, in common with teal and wigeon, was short-lived, representing the later passage referred to above. Again, in the winter of 1948-49 the late autumn flocks reached a peak of 159 on November 6th, after which there was a sharp drop with a rise again in December, followed by a fall to only 16 on January 1st.

#### COMMON POCHARD. *Aythya ferina* (L.).

The total number of pochard recorded in the middle of the winter of 1947-48 was more than double the census figures for the same time of year in 1937-38, 1938-39 and 1948-49, but before drawing any conclusions from this it is advisable to consider the census in detail.

Taking first the winter of 1947-48, there was a sharp rise from 987 on November 18th to 2057 on December 20th: while the November census may have excluded a few birds, as about two hundred and fifty ducks could not be separated owing to bad light, this could not seriously affect the pattern. Moreover, at Barn Elms the census figure of 227 on December 20th was well below the peak of about 500 on the 7th, and the total does not include about two hundred mixed pochard and tufted ducks in flight at Feltham. In January there was a further increase

to a total of 2721, the chief features being a *drop* from 387 to none at Walton Reservoirs and a rise at Staines from 263+ on December 20th to at least 500 on the 27th and 1267 on January 17th. This last flock contained a remarkably high preponderance of males in a ratio of about 13 to 1. By February 14th the total for the Area had dropped by over a thousand, though there were still 1010 at Staines. This flock remained the largest, accounting for 553 of the total of about a thousand on March 6th, and 53 out of 213 a fortnight later.

Results for the first half of the winter of 1948-49 show very much lower figures, a total of 1147 on January 1st including less than ten at Staines and none at Walton, a favourite wintering-ground in some years. Barn Elms, on the other hand, resumed its position as one of the most favoured localities. The totals show little increase over the pre-war census, and raise the question of what may be considered the normal winter population. This is a difficult problem, as large flocks of pochard regularly come and go without staying the whole winter. If the August-September passage, which has produced flocks of up to 450+, be excluded, there are only three occasions prior to the winter of 1938-39 when records of single flocks have reached the 400 mark—namely, 500+ at Barn Elms on December 3rd, 1925, about 400 at the same place on January 28th, 1933, and about 400 at Ruislip on December 28th, 1935. More normally, since about 1924, the largest flocks of the winter have numbered 200-300.

The only occasion prior to December 18th, 1937 (1) on which it has been possible even to guess at the total for the Area was at the end of December 1935, when there were probably over a thousand pochard. This is now in all probability a very average winter maximum, though in hard winters many more are found. Thus, the 1938-39 census straddled the peak period, when in late December and early January there were 500-550 on Barn Elms alone.

It was in this winter too that regular visits of diving ducks to the adjacent waters of the Thames were first recorded, though it is uncertain whether this apparent innovation may not have been the result of bird-watchers turning their attention to the river on being excluded from the reservoirs by war-time restrictions.

It is unfortunate for record purposes that there was no census in the winter of 1946-47, as on December 24th Barn Elms had a flock of 1160 pochard, most of which stayed until there was no open water left for them; gatherings of about 1000 on the Thames on February 28th and of 1500-2000 at Walton about the same time probably contained some if not all of the Barn Elms flock. From these figures there seems little doubt that the pochard has increased considerably as a *hard winter* visitor. On the other hand, it is of particular interest that Staines (which formerly was favoured on autumn passage but not in winter) supported a four-figure flock at almost full strength for about two months during the *mild winter* of 1947-48. There are not yet any grounds for assuming that this is part of a general increase in the winter population.

TUFTED DUCK. *Aythya fuligula* (L.)

In contrast to the very large numbers of pochard in the winter of 1947-48 compared with the census figures for 1938-39, the numbers of tufted duck show a slight decrease. The additional drop in the early winter of 1948-49 is not sufficient to justify any suggestion of a declining trend, and the peak winter population is really remarkably steady at a level of about 2500-3000. It is worth recalling in this connection that the one census in the winter of 1937-38 produced a total of 2489 on December 18th without being quite as complete as the post-war counts. This level does not take into account exceptional movements due to hard weather.

Examining the 1947-48 census in greater detail it is worthy of note that the figures do not include St James's Park, where there were 398 on December 20th, raising the peak to 3177. The largest flocks on the census dates were as follows:—in November, 348 at Walthamstow Reservoirs and 457 at Walton; in December, 462 at Walthamstow, 346 at Barn Elms, 371 at Lonsdale Road and 1008 at Walton. Numbers were well maintained with very little change in total until after the count on March 6th. A fortnight later numbers had fallen to a third of the previous level, while the late April and early July figures were around the three hundred mark.

It will be useful at this point to bring up to date the maximum flock figures published in the *London Bird Report* for 1938 (2), when the largest single flock was one of about a thousand. In the winter of 1938-39 a very severe spell of weather from December 18th to 26th was followed by a rise in the numbers at Barn Elms to 1400-1500 on January 7th, a number which had been reduced to less than half four days later. During the war years tufted duck frequented the Thames in much greater numbers than previously observed, and though comparatively few figures are available a flock of 700-800 at Chelsea on February 14th, 1942, was outstanding. The exceptional winter of 1946-47 produced the largest flocks yet recorded: at Barn Elms there were 1000+ on December 31st, and a similar number up to February 15th; at Lonsdale Road there were 500+ on December 30th; at Walton, 1200-1500 on February 1st had grown to over 3500 on the 25th, while flocks of up to 200-300 were also seen on the Thames. A study of these figures suggests that the immense gathering at Walton represented the whole of the population of the reservoirs on the south bank of the Thames when the freeze-up was at its height. It is unfortunate that no complete census had been arranged for that winter, as the one flock just exceeds the previous highest total for the whole area. Even so, in view of the frozen conditions of most of the waters at this time it is doubtful if the total would have much exceeded four thousand.

GOLDENEYE. *Bucephala c. clangula* (L.).

During the census of 1947-48 the number of goldeneye did not exceed 27, a figure slightly below the comparable counts in 1938-39, when there were 39 in December and January and 46 in February and March. Re-

gular counts of this species are available from about 1924 onwards, becoming more detailed in 1930, and it is of interest for comparative purposes to note that the average size of the largest flock recorded at Staines during each of the ten winters, 1929-30 to 1938-39 inclusive, was 33-35. If, however, we take only the first five of these winters we get an average of 40, compared with 27 for the last five. Figures for the other main wintering area at Molesey are not so extensive, but the winters with the largest flocks were 1933-34 and 1935-36 with 33 and 23 respectively. While counts during the war years naturally are not very numerous, such figures as exist confirm the downward trend, the largest flock up to and inclusive of the winter of 1947-48 being of about 25 on December 26th, 1941. Though the exceptional winter of 1946-47 caused the biggest gathering known on the Thames, namely, a flock of 20+ on February 23rd, it did not produce any larger numbers elsewhere.

In view of declining numbers in recent years it is interesting to be able to record that on January 1st, 1949, there were 59 goldeneyes in the area, of which 54 were in one flock at Staines. Incidentally, this is the largest flock yet recorded, exceeding ones of 50 on February 28th, 1931, and 50+ on December 25th, 1931.

#### GOOSANDER. *Mergus m. merganser* L.

The number of goosander observed during the census of 1947-48 and on January 1st, 1949, never exceeded 156 (March 6th, 1948) and was on the average only about half the number for the corresponding period in the winter of 1938-39, when the maximum was 263 on February 18th. While milder conditions may be the cause of the drop from the high figures observed in some intervening years, it would be unjustifiable to attempt any further explanation until a long series of results is available. It should be noted, however, that Staines, which formerly shared with Molesey the distinction of being the chief wintering-ground of this species in the London Area, is now relatively deserted, and the largest number seen in 1948 was 13.

In reviewing the past status of the goosander it is exceptionally difficult to come to any definite conclusions, unless a complete census of the various haunts in the area has been made, as flocks frequently move from one group of reservoirs to another and a series of daily counts at one group only presents a thoroughly misleading picture. There was no complete census before the winter of 1937, and past status can best be reviewed by a comparison of the largest single flocks recorded for the Area in successive winters irrespective of locality. This shows that from 1922-23 to 1931-32 the largest flocks were of 60+ on February 18th, 1922, and 62 on March 14th, 1931. In the winter of 1932-33 the maximum reached was 86, and thereafter until the war, when observations at reservoirs virtually ceased, the largest flock exceeded a hundred in every winter but one. Unfortunately the census in the winter 1938-39 missed the peak period, when, following an exceptional spell of severe weather, flocks of 184 at Molesey and 103 at Staines were seen on December 28th. Since this spell was so exceptional, however, and num-

bers did not stay at that level, the census totals for the whole Area of 213 on January 21st, 1939, 263 on February 18th and 215 on March 18th probably presented a truer picture of the normal population at that time.

Much higher numbers were recorded on February 2nd, 1945 (Walton 320+), and in February, 1947 (Walton 550, Queen Mary Reservoir about 600—though these may refer to the same flock). These are difficult to fit into the general picture in the absence of figures for the intervening war years and of any series of counts for Queen Mary Reservoir comparable in regularity with those available for Barn Elms, Walton and Staines. Even if these large flocks represented a hard-weather influx rather than a gathering of the normal London population on the remaining unfrozen water, they are still in striking contrast with the census results.

SMEW. *Mergus albellus* L.

The number of smew observed during the winter of 1947-48 remained very steady until the end of February or early March, when there was evidently a return passage movement through the area. The winter population of about a hundred compares closely with the figure of 91 on January 1st, 1949, and suggests that this level may now be considered normal in an average winter. Comparison with the census of 1938-39 requires some explanation, as that winter was characterised by a very severe spell in the second half of December. The actual census, however, missed the peak period and the count of 97 on January 21st was smaller than the single flock at Walton a few weeks earlier. Even all these did not stay, and the February figure of 56 compares closely with the 51 recorded on the one census in the winter of 1937-38.

In the absence of any census before 1937, the only basis for an examination of the long-term trend of the numbers of this species in winter is again the size of the largest flocks. After the winter of 1928-29 there was a decline in numbers at Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road, while at Walton between that winter and 1932-33 the largest flock recorded was one of 29. In the winter of 1933-34 new peaks were reached at Walton (51 on January 25th) and in the Lea Valley (25 on February 24th). About this period flocks were also being seen at Hampton and Stoke Newington Reservoirs. The previous largest flock had been one of 48 at Barn Elms on December 6th, 1925, an exceptional number at that time.

In the absence of a complete census it is impossible to be very definite, but there does not seem to have been any appreciable change after 1933-34 until 1938-39, when a cold spell in the second half of December brought in the largest flock of smew which has yet been recorded for the Area, 117 being seen at Molesey on December 28th. Though numbers did not remain at this level, over half stayed on. Observations during the war years naturally were haphazard, but a new preference developed for the Brent (70-80 on February 28th, 1943), and larger flocks than usual occurred in the Lea Valley (62 on January

31st, 1942). Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road again became one of the chief resorts (c. 60 on February 13th, 1944). Once again it is to be regretted that no complete census is available for the winter of 1946-47, when Barn Elms (78), Staines (48) and the Lea Valley (89) all had their biggest flocks yet recorded. Walton with 89 was visited by more smew than in any other winter except 1938-39. It is tempting to conclude from these figures that the number of smew visiting the Area has markedly increased, and if by this is meant the numbers just before or in the early stages of exceptionally hard weather, there can be no doubt that the conclusion would be correct, but it is far from certain whether the number which stay throughout the winter under average conditions has changed appreciably during the last fifteen years.

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## The Status and Distribution of Birds in the London Area

AN INDEX TO RELEVANT NOTES AND PAPERS IN THE  
*LONDON NATURALIST* AND *LONDON BIRD REPORT*  
1916-1948

**D**URING the last thirty years a very considerable store of ornithological information has been accumulating in the *London Naturalist* and the *London Bird Report*. The existence of much of interest is, however, probably unknown to many members because of its age and its being hidden away in a mass of un-indexed material on various branches of natural history. A general index of the *London Naturalist*, arranged under subjects and authors, may eventually be prepared, but there is a need now for a more specialised and detailed index to those notes and papers which provide a background to the work being carried on by the Ornithological Section. By drawing attention to what has already been achieved the following bibliography, used in conjunction with the annual systematic lists, will help to reveal the gaps in our knowledge and indicate profitable lines of future enquiry.

The bibliography is arranged in three main sections:

1. Status of birds in the London Area generally.
2. Local populations.
3. Status and distribution of particular species.

Ornithological material not concerned with distribution and status is omitted, together with migration tables and work published elsewhere than in the *L.N.* and *L.B.R.* Detailed mention of the annual systematic lists, in which are embodied certain ringing recoveries, is unnecessary. Bird notes published in the *L.N.* before 1916 do not come within our present scope as they are either of a general nature or are in the form of short annual lists. The London Area is defined as the area within a circle of twenty miles radius centred on St Paul's Cathedral.

C. B. A.

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## Bird Ringing Report 1947-48

THE Society's returns to the Bird-Ringing Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology for the 1947-1948 season show an increase over the previous year. The 28 ringers who took part sent in details of 615 birds ringed, an increase of 106. Of the 60 species ringed the following are noteworthy:—2 Roseate Terns ringed by W. G. Teagle in the Firth of Forth area, 18 Kestrels by R. W. Hayman in Richmond Park, 12 Buzzards by E. A. Blake in South Wales and 10 Reed-Warblers by H. E. Andrews at Mayesbrook Park Gravel Pit, Essex.

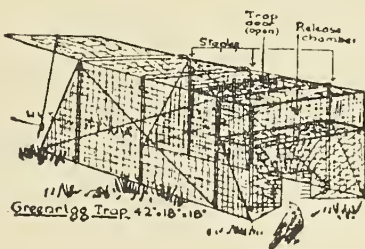
An arrangement has now been made with the British Trust for Ornithology by which the Society is notified of *all* recoveries of birds ringed by its members, instead of only the more important ones.

The following is an analysis of the returns of the 28 ringers taking part:—

<i>Ringer</i>	<i>Nestlings</i>	<i>Trapped</i>	<i>Total</i>
H. E. Andrews ... ..	10	—	10
M. J. Ardley ... ..	21	2	23
C. B. Ashby ... ..	—	10	10
T. L. Bartlett ... ..	6	29	35
D. Beauchamp ... ..	—	1	1
G. Beven ... ..	2	1	3
E. A. Blake ... ..	20	—	20
S. Boardman ... ..	—	23	23
C. L. Collette ... ..	3	11	14
P. W. E. Currie ... ..	26	8	34
S. H. Davies ... ..	15	—	15
R. S. R. Fitter ... ..	17	8	25
D. Goodwin ... ..	—	1	1
R. W. Hayman ... ..	33	—	33
R. W. Mayo ... ..	8	6	14
R. G. Newton ... ..	10	29	39
W. D. Park ... ..	5	—	5
E. R. Parrinder ... ..	19	—	19
B. A. Richards ... ..	14	3	17
P. F. C. Rumsey ... ..	5	12	17
W. F. Siebert ... ..	—	7	7
W. D. Sturrock ... ..	16	—	16
W. G. Teagle ... ..	24	4	28
A. G. G. Thompson ... ..	19	1	20
C. N. Walter ... ..	2	11	13
A. C. Wheeler ... ..	2	23	25
C. A. White ... ..	2	1	3
J. A. Wigzell ... ..	47	98	145
Total, 1948 ... ..	326	289	615
Total, 1947 ... ..	263	246	509

Ringers are reminded that the Society's returns to the British Trust are due on October 1st, and therefore schedules should be sent to the Ringing Secretary as early as possible in September. Members who would like to engage in bird ringing should apply to the Ringing Secretary, B. A. Richards, 29b St John's Avenue, Putney, S.W.15.

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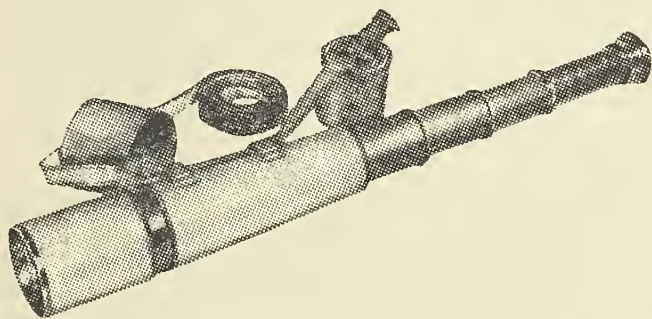


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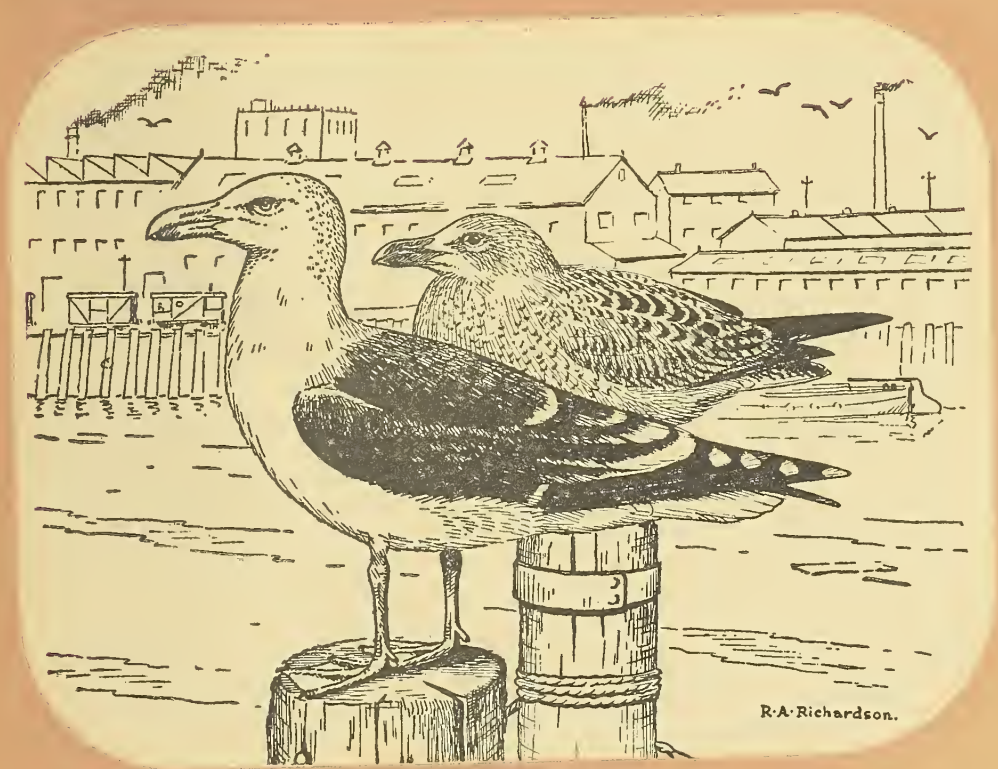
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# THE LONDON BIRD REPORT

No. 14



Published November 1950 by

THE LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

NUMBER FOURTEEN · 1949 · PRICE: TWO SHILLINGS & SIXPENCE



# THE LONDON BIRD REPORT

## NO. 14

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THE drawing on the cover by R. A. Richardson is of Great Black-backed Gulls, which are increasing on the London Thames in winter. On January 29th, 1950, 235 were counted on the river between Woolwich and Barnes.









COCK NIGHTJAR HOVERING.

*Photographed by Eric Hosking.*

Records of Nightjars in Surrey and Kent are given on p. 21.

# The London Bird Report 1949

Edited by

C. B. Ashby, M.B.O.U.

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## Introduction

IN THE LONDON AREA IN 1949 the Black Redstart and the Little Ringed Plover continued their successful colonisation; the former still mainly in the blitzed parts of the City, the latter almost exclusively on gravel areas artificially exposed by man. The plane trees outside the Natural History Museum at South Kensington were used for an unsuccessful nest by a pair of Jays, a species now regularly noted in Inner London. Even Magpies were seen in some of the parks and one at Brompton Cemetery remained for six months. Rooks, though strongly established in the outer suburbs, are more or less banished from the inner zone, so that the circumstantial evidence of a pair nesting near Hither Green, only six miles from the City, is of some interest. Herons nest in several colonies in the London Area and a complete census is organised annually by the Society in conjunction with the British Trust for Ornithology. The 1949 figures show that the Herons have made good their losses of the cold spell early in 1947 and their population at present, in mid-1950, is higher still (185 breeding pairs). The Wood-Lark seems now to be an established breeding bird in small numbers in Middlesex and parts of Essex within the London Area, although it was only in 1945 for Essex, and in 1946 for Middlesex, that we recorded the first nesting of the species in these counties for many years. (The Wood-Lark breeds regularly in the part of our Area south of the Thames). In contrast, both the Stonechat and the Wryneck remain at a low ebb and, in the main, the nesting of the Barn-owl (not really a rare species around London) still eludes our observers. Shoveler again nested successfully at Perry Oaks, but though breeding-season records of Garganey continue to come in the nesting of this species remains to be confirmed.

Among the most obvious of migrant *passeres* through the built-up areas were the autumn flocks of Chaffinches which were again seen flying over Trafalgar Square and some of the parks. Although the birds seen totalled nearly seven hundred they were doubtless only a part of a much bigger passage and probably hundreds more went over undetected. A noisy band of Long-tailed Tits in the plane trees near St. Paul's on October 3rd was evidently part of a westerly movement

through the City, some being seen shortly afterwards on the vanes and tower of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Peter in Holborn, as well as in trees in Fetter Lane and elsewhere. Altogether five species of tits, notably Blue Tits, were represented in an unusually large autumn influx in Inner London, and they were often seen perching on buildings and scaffolding. Pied Flycatchers were also seen on autumn passage, not only in the open parts of the suburbs but even in the inner parks. The most remarkable migrant of all, however, was the Great Grey Shrike which visited a taxidermist's premises in busy Camden Town in the early morning of May 23rd and left in a highly unusual manner—alive. The sight one day in October of a Peregrine Falcon chasing a Kestrel over the roof tops surrounding Parliament Square, the migrant Water-Rail found freshly dead in the playground of a girls' school at Isleworth, the wild cries of Curlews and the calls of migrant Redwings heard indistinctly above the hum of the traffic after dark, were some of the other experiences of 1949 which help us to put our conceptions of broad front migration into a proper perspective.

Though we may occasionally detect such migration actually in progress, we more often see only the effects of it. We note, for example, the changing composition of the wader companies as they halt at favoured localities to feed and rest before moving on. The London Area, with its many gravel pits and lakes, its network of reservoirs and filter beds, and its notable sewage farm at Perry Oaks, is rich in suitable wader habitats. Watchers at even a coastal sanctuary might not be dissatisfied with a year that could produce records of twenty-nine species of waders (including Avocet, Temminck's Stint and Red-necked Phalarope) and sixteen species of ducks; yet such was London's showing of wildfowl in 1949. Even such maritime waders as Turnstones, Oystercatchers, Knots, Sanderlings and Grey Plovers again called in, as well as Black-tailed Godwits, Whimbrel, Curlew-Sandpipers, Little Stints, Wood-Sandpipers, Spotted Redshanks, and many others. The new King George VI Reservoir near Staines was almost empty in spring and autumn and numerous waders were attracted to the pools on its extensive shingle bed.

A Puffin freely walking in and out of a boiler house at the Surrey Commercial Docks must have been a remarkable sight, particularly as its rescuer had made for it "a warm little jacket" after fishing it out of the dock and carefully removing the oil which matted its plumage. Another Puffin, which made an unauthorised landing in the village street at Stanwell, Middlesex, on October 30th, was impounded by the local police and eventually found itself at the London Zoo. A Gannet appeared on the reservoirs at Kempton Park about this time but died shortly afterwards. The year saw the occurrence of two Leach's Forked-tailed Petrels, the first on January 7th and the other on November 13th, both at Staines. With the exception of dead birds found at Honor Oak Park in 1942 and near Gerrards Cross in 1948, this is a species which is almost unknown in the London Area, at least in the last fifty years; so that two separate occurrences in 1949 are most surprising. Kittiwake, Arctic Skua, Long-

tailed Duck, Scoter and Velvet-Scoter were other sea-going species seen on these big reservoirs during the year.

In April a Kite was seen flying over Epping Forest and two days later one was reported outside the Area, about forty miles to the north-east, near Colchester, Essex. There are also records of occasional Buzzards, Harriers, Merlins, Hobbies, Long-eared and Short-eared Owls; of a Bittern flushed in January from a reed bed near Walton; of a Bewick's Swan, Great Northern Diver and a flock of grey geese; of Snow-Buntings, Waxwings, Hoopoes and Quail.

The organised field enquiries, such as the watch on Black Redstarts, Herons, Great Crested Grebes and Little Ringed Plovers, already mentioned, as well as the gravel pits survey and the census work on ducks, have again attracted much support. The gravel pits survey, which has been running since 1948, is designed as a study of the effect which excavation for gravel has had on local bird populations; an effect which may be found of some note in view of the many pits around London. The survey is being carried on until March, 1951, after which the results will be published. The census of ducks, undertaken in co-operation with the International Wildfowl Institute, was continued for the third successive year. The winter of 1949-50 was again a mild one and the duck population remained at a relatively low level compared with the numbers observed in hard weather. A summary of the results from the beginning of 1949 to the end of the 1950-51 series of counts will appear in the next Report; so that our comment now may be confined to remarking on the increase in the population of Mallard over the past few years, presumably as a result of several mild winters following the exceptionally severe one of early 1947.

Much enthusiasm has been put into the continued marking of birds with B.T.O. rings, and the recovery of a Blackbird ringed in the nest at Wimbledon in May, 1945, and shot in Finistère in January, 1949, is notable for its being only the third recovery abroad of a British-ringed Blackbird. The work being done on Starlings and Starling roosts has involved the netting and ringing, so far, of over 950 Starlings on their roosting ledges in Trafalgar Square and Northumberland Avenue. Up to the close of 1949 only two recoveries of birds ringed in this roost had been reported, but since then we have had news of numerous others. As the work will be continued at least during the coming winter we have hopes of many more, especially if enough members can be persuaded to set up small traps in their gardens with the express intention of catching and ringing as many Starlings as possible. The recovery of marked birds is essential if we are to find the answers to some of the problems concerning the movements of Starlings in the London Area.

We have mentioned in the editorial pages of the *L.B.R.* for several years past that the Ornithological Section of the Society is engaged on the task of preparing a book on the birds of the Area in the last fifty years. The abstraction and indexing of previously published references to London Area birds in various journals continues and should be com-

plete by the spring of 1951. This material and the Society's own records are, however, so voluminous that early publication of the book is hardly to be expected. Each year a selection from the notes sent in by our 200 or more observers is published in the *L.B.R.* in an attempt to provide a reference background to the book in fair detail, and to maintain a continuous history of certain species from year to year. There are some species (Nuthatch, Nightingale and Redshank are examples) for which notes are, as a rule, not published; not because these birds are particularly common or particularly rare, but because we are convinced that the records we receive of them would, if published each year, be a gross understatement of their distribution and status. The *L.B.R.*, like any other local bird report, can only be a sort of minimum statement, but similar treatment in print of records of such species, say, as Wood-Lark and Nuthatch could lead only to misunderstandings. Were it not for the nearness of the book we would publish each year a status report on a selected few of these "special species"; but for the moment we prefer to preserve silence until all the information on them can be reviewed. Many of these species are listed in the current Recording Circular, issued by the Committee, as being deserving of special study.

We offer our thanks to the many to whom we have become indebted during the year: to the Metropolitan Water Board, the Middlesex County Council, and the many other landowners who have allowed our members access to their property; to the following 240 observers who have sent in notes, and particularly to L. Baker, J. S. S. Beesley, J. F. Burton, Mrs E. A. Greenfield, Mrs R. C. Homes, F. J. L. Mitchell, D. C. Pegram and D. E. Pomeroy, who have given special assistance; to R. A. Richardson for the cover drawing and Eric Hosking for the frontispiece.

### List of Observers

- |                              |                          |                          |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
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| Miss C. M. Acland.           | Miss A. K. Beresford.    | C. L. Collenette.        |
| Miss B. J. Allden.           | A. H. Betts.             | R. L. Collett.           |
| H. E. Andrews.               | Dr. G. Beven.            | S. Cramp.                |
| Miss E. M. Archer.           | H. A. Bilby.             | H. A. Craw.              |
| M. J. Ardley.                | G. Binks (per P.E.B.).   | D. A. E. Cross.          |
| C. B. Ashby.                 | Miss P. E. Bird.         | E. L. Crouch.            |
| R. S. Ashley.                | D. J. Boatman (D.J.Bn.). | J. Cullen.               |
| H. G. Attlee.                | Lt.-Col. C. L. Boyle     | R. daCunha.              |
| S. Austin.                   | (per W.G.T.).            | P. W. E. Currie.         |
| Sir Philip Manson-Bahr.      | Mrs W. I. Brewer.        | Miss M. Curtis.          |
| J. A. Bailey.                | R. O. Britten.           | J. E. S. Dallas.         |
| A. E. Baker.                 | P. E. Brown.             | M. Davenport             |
| C. E. Baker.                 | Mrs R. S. Brown.         | (per E.McE.).            |
| E. R. Baker.                 | B. W. Brownsey           | Miss A. M. Davis.        |
| L. Baker.                    | (per E.C.W.).            | Miss R. Davis.           |
| A. W. Bartlett.              | D. D. Bunce.             | P. Dehn.                 |
| D. J. Bartlett (per T.L.B.). | J. F. Burton.            | W. C. Doughty.           |
| T. L. Bartlett.              | G. S. Cansdale.          | Miss K. Douglas-Smith.   |
| Dr. H. A. Bayliss.           | D. Carr.                 | F. Dutton (per H.F.G.).  |
| C. S. Bayne.                 | L. I. Carrington.        | G. Edwards (per E.R.P.). |
| J. S. S. Beesley.            | S. H. Chalke.            | K. V. Elphinstone.       |
| Miss M. Bennett.             | K. R. Chandler.          | M. D. England.           |

- A. E. English.  
 H. J. Evans.  
 J. Farrand.  
 C. B. J. Feltham  
 (per E.C.W.).  
 F. M. Firth.  
 R. S. R. Fitter.  
 D. V. Freshwater.  
 W. A. L. Friedlein.  
 L. Friend (per E.Mc.E.).  
 V. R. Garrett.  
 F. C. Gerrard  
 (per W.G.T.).  
 A. Gibbs.  
 W. E. Glegg.  
 D. Goodwin.  
 Miss E. M. Goom.  
 Miss N. Goom.  
 R. S. M. Green.  
 Mrs E. A. Greenfield.  
 H. F. Greenfield.  
 Miss R. H. Griffiths.  
 T. Guthrie (per E.McE.).  
 Miss G. A. Hains.  
 R. W. Hale.  
 D. G. Hall.  
 K. G. Harris.  
 L. F. Harris.  
 C. J. O. Harrison.  
 Dr. J. M. Harrison.  
 Dr. J. K. Hasler.  
 W. Hastings (per E.McE.).  
 R. S. Hatch.  
 F. Hawtin.  
 P. J. Hayman.  
 R. W. Hayman (R.W.Hn.).  
 G. A. Hebditch.  
 E. H. Herbert.  
 S. D. Herington.  
 T. Hinton (per W.G.T.).  
 J. N. Hobbs.  
 R. C. Hodgson (R.C.Hn.).  
 Miss V. Hollick  
 (per W.G.T.).  
 P. A. D. Hollom.  
 H. C. Holme.  
 F. J. Holroyde.  
 R. C. Homes.  
 K. E. Hoy.  
 C. Hughes (C.Hs.).  
 Miss I. Hughes  
 (per W.G.T.).  
 Sir Cyril Hurcomb.  
 C. E. Hutchings.  
 K. H. Hyatt.  
 G. C. Jackson.  
 Miss M. R. Jellicoe.  
 Miss L. J. Johns.  
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 Lady Enid S. Jones.  
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- Miss P. M. S. Jones.  
 S. Keon.  
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 K. P. Keywood.  
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 E. G. Pedler.  
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 D. Taylor (per P.E.B.).  
 G. Taylor.  
 J. E. Taylor.  
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 D. S. Wilson.  
 Dr. W. H. D. Wince.  
 J. D. Wood.  
 G. Wright (per C.B.A.).  
 P. F. Yeo.

## Birds of the London Area 1949

### A REPORT ON BIRD LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

**T**HE number preceding the name of each species refers to Witherby's *Check-List of British Birds* (1941), where the full scientific name will be found. All records are for 1949 except where otherwise stated. The initials following each record indicate the observer(s) responsible for it. The six counties within the circle of twenty miles radius are indicated by their initials, *viz.*:—B = Bucks.; E = Essex; H = Herts.; K = Kent; M = Middlesex; S = Surrey. Records from the Thames between Richmond and Putney, and from the adjacent Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road Reservoirs, are grouped under T owing to the frequent movements between these reservoirs and the river. The following abbreviations are also used:—*B.B.* = *British Birds* magazine; *G.P.* = gravel pit; *L.B.R.* = *London Bird Report*; *Res.* = reservoir; *S.F.* = sewage farm.

An open map of the London Area will be found useful for a full appreciation of many of the records. As the history of some of the species is intended to be continuous, reference to the systematic lists of previous issues of the *L.B.R.* is recommended.

#### 2 Hooded Crow

E Walthamstow Res., one on Nov. 12 (H.W.R.).

H Watford S.F., one on Dec. 17 (D.V.F., W.D.M.).

S With two exceptions the following records are all from a comparatively restricted area and may refer to the same bird or birds: Putney, one seen almost daily on the south bank of the Thames between Jan. 2 and Feb. 7 (J.P.). Wandsworth Park, one disturbed from feeding on allotments on Jan. 1 flew off in the general direction of Richmond Park (H.P.M.), where one was seen on Jan. 1 and 13 (R.W.HN); Barn Elms Res., one on Jan. 13 (A.G.G.T.). The exceptions are Mitcham Common, one on Jan. 11 (D.E.P.); Ewell, two on Mar. 6 (L.I.C.).

#### 2/3 Hooded/Carrion-Crow Hybrid

H Moor Mill, three seen on Dec. 27 were described as having "front of head, throat, wings and tail black, otherwise pale grey with black on every feather, breast heavily black-spotted" (E.H.W.).

#### 3 Carrion-Crow

M/S Inner London, nested in Kensington Gardens (E.M.C.E., C.H.F.P.), and probably nested in Battersea Park, Regent's Park and Westminster (J.N.A.R., W.G.T., E.C.W.); attempted to nest in Fitzroy Square (M.D.E.).

Flock records are published in detail this year (for the first time) as a measure of the species' increasing abundance in the Area:



- E Chingford Plain, 55 gathering at dusk on Jan. 12 (A.F.M.). Leyton Marsh, 23 on Sept. 16 (M.R.J.). Walthamstow Res., c. 40 on Jan. 25 (H.M.R.K.).
- H Elstree, 50 on burnt stubblefield on Sept. 15; Totteridge, 55 on Dec. 26 (E.H.W.).
- M Barnet Gate, 35 on Apr. 15 "as often in this area" (E.H.W.). Bushy and Hampton Court Parks, "as plentiful as ever"; maxima: 68 on newly-sown corn fields on Mar. 25, 70 on Dec. 30 (E.W.P.). Hampstead Heath and Ken Wood lawn, "flocking was earlier and in greater numbers than usual"; maxima: 37 on Aug. 26, 44 on Nov. 1, and c. 70 gathering in the late afternoon of Oct. 29 prior to roosting (V.R.G., G.T.). Ruislip, evening congregations of up to 50 were noted on the Lido sands in Sept. and Oct. (T.L.B.). Staines Moor, 28/29 on Apr. 10 and 17 (G.E.M., B.A.R.). Stanmore, 120 on ploughed land on Apr. 14 (J.A.B.).
- K Beckenham, 60-80 used the grounds of Bethlem Hospital between October, 1948, and March, 1949, as a collecting and feeding area prior to roosting (J.S.S.B.).
- S Barn Elms Res., 35 on Sept. 4 (G.C.L.). Beddington S.F., a flock of usually between 50 and 100 has constantly used the farm for feeding at all seasons since at least 1947, and roosts at the Oaks Estate near Woodmansterne (cf. *L.B.R.*, 1947, p. 3); some 1949 figures at the roost are: 209/219 on Feb. 19, 176 on Mar. 26 (C.B.A., J.S.S.B., H.B. *et al.*). Epsom S.F., c. 100 on Jan. 28 (H.B.). Richmond Park, up to c. 80 in Jan. and Feb. (R.W.HN.).

#### 4 Rook

- M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, four flying over, cawing, and others seen on Mar. 31 (E.MACA.).
- K Between Feb. 28 and July 7 one to four were seen on railway sidings at Hither Green, and nesting strongly suspected though not proved (H.G.A.). These sidings are near the site at Lee Green where four or five pairs nested in 1945.

#### 5 Jackdaw

- M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, a few pairs bred and at least three young were seen (D.G., E.MACA.).

#### 7 Magpie

- M/S Inner London, Brompton Cemetery, one from at least June 10 to the end of the year (M.C.); Kensington Gardens, two on Apr. 4 (E.MCE., O.L.M.). Battersea Park, one on Sept. 16 and Nov. 25 (J.N.A.R.).

#### 10/11 Jay

- M Inner London, recorded from all the central parks, some gardens in Bayswater, Brompton Cemetery, Gray's Inn, and the Royal Hospital, Chelsea (M.C., P.D., E.M. *et al.*). Kensington Gardens, single young birds seen between June 10 and Sept. 14 (E.MCE., O.L.M., C.H.F.P.). South Kensington, a pair attempted to nest in a plane tree in Cromwell Road (D.G., R.W.HN.).

**14 Starling**

The following recoveries of birds ringed by C.N.W., C.L.C., E.R.P., L.B., respectively, were made in 1949.

<i>Date and place of ringing.</i>	<i>Date and place of recovery.</i>
6.vi.48—Beckenham, Kent ...	15.v.49—West Sq., Lambeth (dead).
17.x.48—Richmond, Surrey...	29.xi.49—Trafalgar Sq. roost (released).
4.i.49—Trafalgar Sq. roost .....	2.v.49—Sutton, Surrey (dead).
9.ii.49—Trafalgar Sq. roost .....	7.v.49—Mill Hill, Middx. (dead).

**18 Hawfinch**

- H Elstree, pair and five young (which could hardly fly) in a large garden on July 7 (E.H.W.).
- M Enfield, Whitewebbs Park, two engaged in courtship chasing were seen on Apr. 10, and a young bird on June 26 (L.J.J.). Hampton Court Park, a pair nested successfully at Stud House (E.W.P.). Hampton Hill, an adult and a juvenile on June 11 (P.F.Y.). Harrow Weald Common, a young bird being fed on June 6 (P.M.S.J., W.G.T.). Stanmore, evidence points to c. 4 pairs having bred successfully in Bentley Priory grounds (J.A.B., E.H.W., W.H.D.W.); c. 30 there in hornbeams on Mar. 6 (J.A.B.). Inner London, St John's Wood, a male seen in Elm Tree Road on June 8, and heard on June 24 (H.M.R.K.).
- K Beckenham, Kelsey Park, a pair feeding young on June 1 (J.S.S.B.).
- S Nesting reported from Kew Gardens, Limpsfield, Richmond Park, Roehampton, Streatham Common, and Tooting Common (H.G.A., F.M.F. *et al.*). Dulwich Wood, two adults with 3/4 young on June 8 (H.E.P.).

**19 Greenfinch**

- M Bushy Park, flock of c. 500 on Sept. 12 (E.W.P.). Inner London, Kensington Gardens, at least one pair nested (G.C.L., E.M.A.C.).

**20 Goldfinch**

- H Watford S.F., c. 200 with Greenfinches, Linnets and Chaffinches on Mar. 20 (W.D.M.).
- M/S Inner London, Battersea Park, one pair nested successfully (E.M.N.). Noted in the breeding season in Regent's Park and St John's Wood (H.C.H., H.M.R.K., E.H.W.). Victoria Park, 15-25 including 3-4 "greypates" soliciting for food on Sept. 3 (M.R.J.). Winter records for Cripplegate bombed sites, Kensington and Kensington Gardens.
- S Inner suburbs: Streatham Common, one on June 14, 15, 17; Tooting Common, a pair nest-building on June 23 and a family party on Sept. 22; Wandsworth Common, a pair (the male singing) in April, May and June, and a family party on June 16 (H.G.A.). Denmark Hill, a pair feeding young in Ruskin Park on May 31 (J.S.S.B.).

**21 Siskin**

- E Epping Forest, five at High Beech on Jan. 9 and six near Loughton Camp on Dec. 31 (C.E.B.).
- H Rickmansworth, 20 on Jan. 16 (J.A.B.).
- M Bushy Park, 75/100 on Jan. 8 (P.F.Y.), and large flocks during March, max. c. 120 between Mar. 18 and 24 (E.W.P.). Winter parties of up to eight reported from Brent Park, Enfield, Finchley, Hampstead, Harefield, Poyle and Stanmore; Uxbridge, max. 20/30 on Jan. 12 (many observers). Inner London, Addison Road, W.14, an adult male in a large neglected garden on Oct. 30 (C.L.B.; supporting details received).
- K Beckenham, Monk's Orchard, 12-15 from Feb. 19-27, and three on Mar. 27 (D.E.P.). Keston Common, one on Mar. 9; Lullingstone Park, c. 25 on Mar. 20 (J.S.S.B.). Petts Wood, c. 25 on Mar. 30 (J.M.C.).
- S Winter parties of up to 15 noted at Ashted, Bookham and Oxted (C.B.A., H.F.G.). Godstone, c. 100 on Feb. 13 (H.F.G.). Littleworth Common, 25/30 on Dec. 26 (R.C.H.N.). Shirley, 30/40 on Mar. 20 and Apr. 3 (H.E.P.). Weybridge, up to c. 35 in Jan. and c. 12 in Dec. (R.S.M.G.).

**25 Lesser Redpoll**

- Non-breeding season records received from commons and other localities in all counties, as usual, except from the small part of Bucks. within the Society's Area; no big flocks were reported this year, parties of c. 30 being the largest.
- H Radlett, pair active and noisy in a garden on May 11, but no nest seen (E.H.W.).
- M Stanmore, a pair bred as last year at Bentley Priory, and another pair near the Alpine Inn (E.H.W.). Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one on Nov. 8 (E.M.C.E.).
- K Beckenham, Langley Park Golf Course, one pair bred (J.S.S.B.). Hayes, a family party on June 18 (G.E.M.).
- S Nested on Limpsfield Common (F.M.F.), Wandsworth Common and possibly Tooting Common (H.G.A.). Carshalton, a family party in gardens near Carshalton Park on June 16, 17 (H.G.A.). Sutton, one or more males in song flight on Apr. 17 (R.S.R.F.). Tadworth and Walton Heaths, seven pairs present during the breeding season (H.B.). Wimbledon Common, two to three birds noted during the breeding season (H.P.M.).

**30 Linnet**

- The inner limit of suburban nesting in 1949 seems to have been approximately: Finchley, Mill Hill, Brent, Edgware, Ham, Wandsworth Common, Elmers End, Barnehurst.
- M Inner London, Cripplegate bombed area, one to two noted between Feb. 26 and April 8 (E.H.M., E.H.W. *et al.*). Green Park, one on Nov. 22 (W.G.T.).

**33 Bullfinch**

The following breeding season records are from within the built-up and suburban areas:

- M Finchley Common, a male and a female in the breeding season (s.k.). Hampstead, a total of 17 seen on widely separated parts of the Heath on June 15 (w.s.s.). Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one heard on June 28 (E.M.A.C.A.).  
 S Dulwich Wood, one pair bred (J.S.S.B.). Streatham Common, a pair present during spring and summer (H.G.A.).

**36 Crossbill**

- S Chipstead, three on Dec. 25, 1947 (H.B.).

**40/41 Chaffinch**

- M Inner London, migratory flocks of passerines, most of which were identified as Chaffinches, were again (cf. *L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 7) seen flying west or north-west over Central London in the autumn; e.g. 426 over Green Park and St. James's Park on Oct. 12 between 0720 and 0745 hours G.M.T., 85 over Trafalgar Square between 0730 and 0930 hours on Nov. 4, and 158 between 0743 and 0900 hours on Nov. 11 (E.R.P., W.G.T.).  
 K Keston, c. 250 found roosting in Holwood Park on Mar. 9 (J.S.S.B.).

**42 Brambling**

The fewness of records for the winter 1948-49 (*vide* Oct.-Dec. records in *L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 7, and notes given below) suggests that the species was scarce during that winter.

- E Epping Forest, one at High Beech on Feb. 22 (P.F.C.R.).  
 H Rickmansworth, one-two on Dec. 11 and 22 (E.A.G., H.F.G.). Watford S.F., one on Dec. 28 (A.G.).  
 M Feltham G.P., one on Mar. 20 (B.A.R.). Hampstead, two on Mar. 13 (G.T.). Brent Res., one-three between Nov. 27 and Dec. 31 (C.A.W. *et al.*). Staines-Perry Oaks district, up to six in December (W.N.M. *et al.*). Inner London, Victoria Park, two on Oct. 28 (M.R.J.).  
 K Lullingstone, one on Mar. 20 (J.S.S.B.). Knockholt, several on Nov. 20 (G.B.).  
 S Epsom, one on Feb. 2 (A.W.W.). Tadworth, one on Mar. 14 (H.B.). Wimbledon, one on Feb. 1 (J.A.W.). One-two reported between Oct. and Dec. from Banstead Heath, Epsom, Ham, Richmond Park, Tadworth and West Molesey (F.R.M., D.P. *et al.*). Beddington S.F., over 50 on Dec. 27 (A.G.G.T.).

**43 Corn-Bunting**

- E Upminster, four at Bulphan Fen on Apr. 26 and one at Belhus Park on May 21; Rainham, one at Berwick Pond on May 15 (M.J.A.).  
 H Maple Cross, one singing on May 15 (E.A.G., H.F.G.).  
 M As last year, recorded in most months from district centred on Stanwell, where one nest was found (H.P.M., E.H.W. *et al.*). Mill Hill, one on Dec. 13, 22 and 25 (E.H.W., who has noted the species only once before in 25 years in this area).

- K Bred on Dartford, Littlebrook and Stone Marshes, and suspected of breeding on Abbey Wood Marshes (W.I.B., J.F.B.).  
 S Betchworth, on the edge of the Society's Area, flock of c. 20 on Jan. 4 and 7 (T.H.L.M.).

#### 49 Cirl Bunting

- H Colney Street, a male singing near Old Parkbury on Apr. 13, 15, 17 and June 11 (B.S., E.H.W.); a female seen on Apr. 23 (W.D.M.).  
 M Staines Res., one on the causeway on Oct. 15 (C.C.R., W.H.D.W.).  
 K Dartford Marshes, two males and a female in a mixed flock of finches and buntings on Dec. 4 (J.F.B.).  
 S Chaldon, one pair bred (R.O.B.).

#### 59 Snow-Bunting

- M Staines, King George VI Res., one on Oct. 23 (H.P.M.). Brent Res., a female from Nov. 28 to Dec. 9; at first with Sky-Larks, later with Chaffinches and Tree-Sparrows (J.A.B., D.V.F., A.G., H.P.M., G.T., E.H.W.).

#### 61 House-Sparrow

- M Harrow Weald, young heard in nest under eaves of houses on *December 22* (W.H.D.W.; cf. *L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 8).

#### 62 Tree-Sparrow

- Non-breeding season flocks exceeding 20 birds occurred in Essex, Herts., Middx. and Surrey, the largest numbers (c. 70) being at the Brent Res. (Middx.) and Beddington S.F. (Surrey).  
 E Sewardstone, bred as usual (P.F.C.R.).  
 H Small colonies of up to c. 6 pairs resident and nesting in the Arkley, Totteridge and Dyrham Park district, and in the Colne valley at London Colney, Moor Mill and Old Parkbury (S.K., E.R.K., E.H.W., *et al.*).  
 M Harlington, at least four pairs nesting (H.A.B.). The Mill Hill and Brockley Hill colonies continue (E.H.W.). Staines Moor, 16 (one carrying food) along the Wraysbury River on May 18 (W.G.T.).  
 K Dartford Marshes, colony of c. 10 pairs breeding (J.F.B.) Elmers End S.F., two pairs bred (G.E.M.).  
 S Nested at Beddington S.F. (two pairs, S.H.C., B.M.), Ham and Richmond Park (R.W.Hn., F.H., F.R.M.), Walton gravel pits (K.P.K.).

#### 69 Wood-Lark

- For a history of the re-establishment of the Wood-Lark as a breeding bird in Essex see *B.B.*, 38, p. 353, and *L.B.R.*, 1945-48; in Middlesex, see *L.B.R.*, 1946-48.  
 E Epping Forest: Pole Hill, one singing on June 4 and 12 (E.T.N.); Sewardstonebury, two to four seen or heard in March, April and June (A.E.J.); Lippittshill, two on June 19 (A.E.J.); High Beech, one on Feb. 23 and three singing on Sept. 18 (A.E.J., P.F.C.R.).

Hainault Forest, a singing male on Mar. 10, and a party of seven at the same place on May 6 (E.R.G.K.). Warley, one heard singing on 26 visits between Feb. and May (P.F.C.R.).

- M Bushy Park, two (one singing) between July 10 and Aug. 7 (E.M.G., E.W.P.). Near Ruislip, either two pairs bred successfully or one pair brought off two broods (T.L.B.). Stanmore, at least two pairs bred, one successfully (J.A.B., W.G.T., E.H.W., W.H.D.W.).
- K Hayes, two flying N.W. on Feb. 19 (A.H.B.); a male singing from May 12 onwards was seen with a presumed female until the end of the year (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.). Orpington, one near Crofton Court on May 29 (A.H.B.). Near Westerham, one singing on Feb. 20 (L.P.), and one collecting food on June 5 (R.C.H.).
- S Bred at Ham Common (F.R.M.), Richmond Park (two pairs, R.W.H.N.), and Wimbledon Common (three pairs, E.S., P.S.); probably bred at Limpsfield Chart (R.C.H.). Singing males noted in spring and summer at Banstead, Fetcham, Mickleham, Oxshott and South Croydon.

### 79 Water-Pipit

- M Staines Res., one with Meadow-Pipits on the causeway on Oct. 15; "head and nape grey-brown; upper parts brown, not olivaceous; rump brown; broad whitish eye-stripe; whitish breast strongly streaked brown; underparts whitish; wings brown; white outer tail feathers; bill dark brown; legs dark flesh-brown; slightly larger than Meadow-Pipit" (description by C.C.R.; seen and described also by W.H.D.W.). This is the only record for the London Area since 1938 (see *L.B.R.*, 1938, p. 7:—one at Walthamstow on Mar. 30, 1938).

### 81 Rock-Pipit

- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on Mar. 13 (P.J.H.).
- K Stone Marshes, two on the foreshore on Dec. 4 (J.F.B.). Swanscombe and Northfleet, four on Feb. 20, and 30-40 with 250-300 Meadow-Pipits on the stretch of salt marsh known as Broadness, Dec. 11 (W.I.B., J.F.B.). By comparison with previous records, such numbers are exceptional for the London Area; but (at least until recently) the Thames marshes just within the Society's boundary have been very little watched compared with those just outside it. There the Rock-Pipit is regularly seen in winter.
- S Barn Elms Res., three on Feb. 13 and one on Oct. 28 (J.MCH.).

### Variant Yellow Wagtails.

A list of references concerning the occurrence of variant Yellow Wagtails is given in the *L.B.R.* for 1948, p. 9.

- M Staines Moor, a cock resembling a typical Blue-headed Wagtail (*M. f. flava*) was seen between Apr. 9 and May 21 (J.A.B., G.T., C.A.W. *et al.*). It is evident that one or more variants occurred also, but unfortunately the details submitted by various observers are conflicting and incomplete. The fullest description is of one in company with a normal male *flavissima* on May 18 and thought to have

been a hen: head pale, almost whitish-grey, with a dark line through the eye and a white line over it; chin white; breast pale cream merging into lemon-yellow at under tail coverts; mantle pale grey; wings brown with lighter edges to feathers; tail brown, outer feathers white (w.g.t.). This plumage is similar to that described and illustrated in *Wild Bird Protection in Norfolk in 1941*, pp. 15-16; and in *B.B.*, 35, p. 127, and 41, pp. 345-6. Perry Oaks, a cock resembling a typical *flava* on Apr. 23 (E.L.C., H.P.M.). Brent Res., a cock with "pale chin and eyestripe and bluish crown" on July 27 (E.H.W.).

S Beddington S.F., one with "pale blue crown and prominent white eye-stripe" on May 26, 29 (B.M.).

### 83 Yellow Wagtail

E Bred as usual at King George V Res. and Sewardstone (P.F.C.R.); and two pairs at Mayesbrook Park G.P. (H.E.A.).

H Moor Mill, one pair bred (w.D.M.). Watford S.F., young seen from July 31 onwards (w.H.D.W.).

H/M More than one pair bred successfully just S.W. of Stocker's Lake, seen either side of county boundary (E.A.G., H.F.G.).

M Brent Res., three nests found less than 100 yards from one another on July 8 (E.H.W.). Hampton, a male at M.W.B. filter beds on June 25 (E.W.P.). Perry Oaks S.F., at least one pair bred (C.A.W.). Staines, c. 70 on land and fences north of King George VI Res. on Aug. 30 (E.H.W.); four at King George VI Res. on Oct. 2 (H.P.M.). Inner London, Cripplegate bombed area, one on May 7 and Aug. 29 (D.V.F., N.J.P.W.); Kensington Gardens, one on Sept. 7 and 14 (C.H., E.M.C.E.); St. James's Park, one on Sept. 7 (w.g.t.).

K Bred on Greenwich (three pairs), Plumstead (two pairs) and Abbey Wood Marshes; breeding confirmed for Thames-side marshes from Erith to Swanscombe and Northfleet (w.I.B., J.F.B.). Elmers End S.F., three pairs nested (G.E.M.).

S Bred at Barn Elms Res. (four pairs at least, G.C.L. *et al.*), Beddington S.F. (B.M.), Epsom S.F. (H.B.) and Ham gravel pits (F.R.M.).

### 89 Grey Wagtail

H West Hyde, a family party on July 10 (E.A.G.).

M Staines, a pair with young on the Colne, May 12; a pair on the Thames on June 27 (R.W.HN.).

M/S Hammersmith, a pair which nested during May on the roof of the Distillers Company's building regularly crossed the Thames to collect food on Barn Elms reservoirs, where a family party was seen on May 23 (G.E., R.W.HN., F.J.L.M.).

S Beddington S.F., a pair present during the breeding season and two adults seen with two juveniles on July 23 (C.J.O.H., B.M.). Molesey Lock, a pair with fledged young on May 17 (R.C.HN.). Weybridge, a pair nested and reared four young (R.S.M.G.). Wimbledon Common, a pair nested successfully by the Beverley Brook (S.C., R.W.HN., D.C.P.).

**90 Pied Wagtail**

- H A pair nested in a gravel cleaning machine at Old Parkbury, at the top of one of the metal legs. Immediately above, the machine was in constant motion; two feet below the nest, lorries halted, collecting the gravel, all day. In spite of vibration, noise and the presence of the men, the birds brought off six young (E.H.W.).
- M/S Inner London, Battersea Park, a young brood being fed during July (J.N.A.R.); Cripplegate bombed area, at least two pairs nested (S.D.H., N.J.P.W. *et al.*).
- K Hayes Common, up to 40 birds roosted regularly in birches and gorse near the 1948 site (*c.f.* *L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 10), from April to the end of the year, including during the breeding season (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.).
- S Barn Elms, up to c. 60 roosted in reeds of a small gravel pit in April and Sept.-Nov. (C.J.O.H., E.MCE., B.A.R., A.G.G.T.). Thornton Heath, London Road, up to c. 300 birds roosted in the plane trees of this busy thoroughfare between August and October. The majority came from Beddington S.F. (1½ miles S.S.W.), fly-lines being traced from the farm to the roost; 265 birds were counted leaving the farm on the evening of Aug. 21 and 293 on Sept. 4 (C.B.A., L.P., M.T.; this roost was noted also in the *L.B.R.* for 1944, p. 5).

**91 White Wagtail**

- M Perry Oaks S.F., a male on May 7 (E.L.C.). Staines Res., a male on Apr. 10 (G.E.M.). King George VI Res., one on Apr. 15 (J.A.B.).
- S Barn Elms Res., two males on May 6 (R.W.HN.) and one male on May 21 (G.C.L.). Beddington S.F., two on Mar. 20 (C.J.O.H.).

**93 Tree-Creeper**

- M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one pair nested successfully (E.MCE., O.L.M.) and possibly a second pair nested (R.W.HN.).

**100 Blue Tit**

- M/S Inner London: an unusually large autumn influx of tits was noted, mainly between Sept. 23 and Oct. 28. Five species were recorded, but Blue Tits predominated and were seen throughout the built-up area, often perching on buildings and scaffolding as well as frequenting gardens, bombed sites and a variety of other habitats. The birds occurred in ones and two and parties up to five. The numerous records received, and the results of simple transect counts made by s.c., leave no doubt that although Blue Tits were seen in all months there was certainly a rise in the Inner London population due to birds on autumn passage, the "peak" apparently being in the first two weeks of October.



**107 Marsh Tit**

M N.W. London, two nests at Stanmore and one at Scratch Wood; Pinner, Stanmore, Mill Hill, Totteridge, Hadley Wood and Cockfosters form the limit south of which (with the exception of Hampstead) the species is rarely seen (E.H.W.). Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one seen with other tits on Oct. 4 and one on Oct. 28 (E.M.C.E.). [St. James's Park, a bird present from Oct. 19 until March, 1950, was at first suspected of being a Willow Tit (not previously recorded in Inner London) from its seemingly darker flanks and lack of gloss on the head. No help could be obtained from the best distinguishing character, the voice, as throughout its stay it was more or less silent, uttering only a "sip" note. The wings, however, showed only a very faint ochre patch or streak on the secondaries, less than in a typical Willow-Tit. By February a faint gloss was detected on the head during bright weather, and the bird was thought after all to be probably a Marsh-Tit (C.H., W.G.T., E.H.W. *et al.*)]

**108 Willow-Tit**

E Epping Forest, a pair on Fairmead Plain on Apr. 15, and four on Riggs Plain on Sept. 21 (K.D.G.M.).

H Rickmansworth, one by Stocker's Lake on Jan. 16 (J.A.B.).

M Near Elstree, one at Scratch Wood in Jan. (W.D.M., E.H.W.). Ruislip, up to six reported from the Common and Poor's Field in March, Sept. and Dec. (T.L.B., P.M.S.J., W.G.T.). Stanmore, one-two on the Common and at Bentley Priory in Jan., March and Dec. (J.A.B., E.H.W.). Near Uxbridge, one-two in two localities in Jan. and Nov. (C.A.W., W.H.D.W.).

K Hayes Common, one on Sept. 7 (J.S.S.B.).

S Bookham Common, one-two in April, Sept. and Nov.; a pair with fledged young, and a singing male not of this pair, on June 12 (G.B.). Esher Common, three on Mar. 12 (K.P.K.). Mitcham Watermeads, one on Sept. 28 (G.B.). Selsdon Wood, one on Mar. 27 (D.E.P.). Tadworth, two on Dec. 23 (H.B.). West Weybridge, one on Dec. 18 (R.W.H.N.). Wimbledon Common, one on Aug. 29 and Oct. 29 (E.L.C., H.P.M.).

**111 Long-tailed Tit**

M An interesting passage movement through the core of the built-up area was detected by E.H.W. on Oct. 3. The calls of a party of 14, with eight Blue Tits, in the plane trees near St. Paul's were heard above the noise of the traffic. The birds made off westwards and were followed by the observer on foot and by bus. Ten minutes later he came up with ten on the vanes and tower of the Church of St. Andrew and St. Peter, Holborn, and in another five minutes saw four, with two Blue Tits, on plane trees in Fetter Lane. Later in the afternoon several were heard in Lincoln's Inn and ten were seen, with Blue Tits, in planes and elms of Torrington Square. All these birds were noisy and moving westwards or north-westwards. A party of eight was seen by J.F. in Hyde Park on Nov. 22.

**114 Great Grey Shrike**

M Inner London, Camden Town, one in the yard of Messrs Edward Gerrard & Sons, taxidermists, on May 23 was first seen on the ground at a leaking water pipe and presently perched on a wall, where it was in view for about two minutes at a distance of ten to fifteen feet. It flew to a roof some 60 feet high and was there watched through a telescope before it finally went out of sight. The premises are closely surrounded by tall buildings with very small back gardens. We have discussed this remarkable record with Mr. F. C. Gerrard who, with some of his employees, first saw the bird as they arrived for work at 9 a.m. In a letter Mr. Gerrard stated: "Not being more than a few yards from the *Handbook* I had the page open at the illustration of the Great Grey Shrike during most of the time we were seeing the bird"; the very white breast and prominent eye-stripe especially were noticed. (The London Zoo reported that no Great Grey Shrike had escaped from the collection).

**119 Red-backed Shrike**

H Totteridge, two pairs bred (E.R.G.K., E.H.W.).

M Edgware, nest with two young found on June 12 (s.H.s.); Mill Hill, two-three pairs bred (A.G., P.E.L.S., E.H.W.; cf. *L.B.R.* for 1948, p. 11). Finchley, a pair on the glebe land built two nests and laid in the second, but both nests were molested (K.G.H.). Ruislip, young from two nests seen on July 5 (T.L.B.). Staines, one pair bred successfully (E.L.C., H.P.M., C.A.W.). Northwood, one pair probably bred (P.M.S.J., W.G.T.).

K Beckenham, Park Langley, one pair bred successfully (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.). Biggin Hill, one pair nested (H.E.P.).

S Nested at Banstead Heath (one pair, H.B.), Bookham Common (one pair, G.B.), Chessington (one pair, A.M.D.), Chipstead Golf Course (one pair, H.B.), Dulwich Wood (one pair, J.S.S.B.), Littleworth Common (one pair, D.P.), Mitcham Common (one pair, C.J.O.H.), Putney Vale (two pairs, R.W.H.N.), South Croydon (one pair, F.M.F.). Chipstead village, Tadworth and Walton Heath, three pairs in the breeding season (H.B.).

**120 Waxwing**

E Brentwood, one on Dec. 6 (H.M.). Loughton, one on Dec. 4 (C.E.B.).

K Bexleyheath, nine on Dec. 28 (per G.A.H.).

S Croydon, two on Dec. 26 (per G.A.H.). Teddington, two on Feb. 16 and 17 (K.V.E., N.G., E.W.P.; see also *B.B.*, 42, 255). Wimbledon, 12 or more on hawthorn in a<sup>n</sup> suburban garden on Dec. 16 (R.A.M.L.).

**121 Spotted Flycatcher**

M/S Inner London, nested in B<sup>1</sup>attersea Park (two pairs), Kensington Gardens, in or near Lincoln's <sup>1</sup>Fields, Regent's Park, St James's Park, Victoria Park and the grounds of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. Probably nested in Craven Hill Gardens, Bayswater.

**123 Pied Flycatcher**

Satisfactory details of the following birds on autumn passage have been received:

- M Inner London, Green Park, one on Sept. 24 (W.G.T.).  
 K Bickley, one on Sept. 16; Ruxley G.P., one on Aug. 28 (F.J.H.). Shooter's Hill, one in Jack Wood on Sept. 17 (J.F.B.).  
 S Inner London, Battersea Park, one on Aug. 10 and one on Sept. 18 (E.M.N.). Clapham Common, one between Sept. 14 and Sept. 24; two on Sept. 16-17 (E.L.C., H.P.M.).

**127 Goldcrest**

- M Inner suburbs: Finsbury Park, one on Nov. 3 (H.P.M.); Hampstead, one-three in April, Sept. and Dec., and one at Temple Fortune on Oct. 27 (V.R.G., G.T., E.H.W.). Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one on Jan. 25 (G.C.L.); Regent's Park, one on Nov. 3 (C.L.B.).  
 S Inner suburbs: Dulwich Wood, up to three in the winter months (J.S.S.B., R.D.).

**[133 Northern Willow-Warbler**

- H One found freshly dead at Aldenham by P.R.K. on Apr. 25 was sent to the British Museum (Nat. Hist.); in reply, Mr. J. D. Macdonald wrote: "We have examined the specimen you sent in and find that it appears to match more closely the characteristics of the Northern Willow-Warbler. I think there can be little doubt that it is that race".]

**135 Wood-Warbler**

- E The only breeding records are, as usual, from Epping Forest and Warley (S.K., P.F.C.R.).  
 H The only records are of six-seven singing males in Cuffley Great Wood in May and June (E.R.G.K., B.S.).  
 M Inner London, Regent's Park, one on Apr. 23 (H.M.R.K., E.M.W.); Victoria Embankment Gardens, one singing on May 7 (F.A.N.). Hampstead Heath, noted in May and August but did not breed (V.R.G., S.K., G.T.). Harrow Weald Common, six singing males, one nest found (P.M.S.J., W.G.T., E.H.W.). Ruislip, one pair bred (T.L.B.). Stanmore Common, at least seven singing on May 27 and young birds seen in June (D.V.F., W.H.D.W.).  
 K Elmstead Woods and Crockham Hill Common, singing birds noted in June (G.B., R.C.H.). Hayes and Keston Commons, eleven pairs bred (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.).  
 S Inner suburbs, Dulwich Wood, two singing males on Apr. 26; one stayed through the breeding season (J.S.S.B., R.D.). Bred at Chesham (one pair, R.C.H.), Littleworth Common (one pair, D.P.), and Wimbledon Common (possibly eight pairs, R.W.H.N., D.C.P.).

**145 Grasshopper-Warbler**

- E Rainham, one singing at Berwick Pond on May 4, 15 and 20 (M.J.A.).  
 M Ruislip Marsh, one on May 8 and May 14 (T.L.B.).

S Bookham Common, two-three pairs present during the breeding season (K.P.K., E.M.C.E., B.A.R.). Old Coulsdon, heard singing on several evenings in June (R.O.B.). Oxshott, one on May 8 (N.G.). (N.G.).

#### 149 Reed-Warbler

E Mayesbrook Park G.P., c. 20 pairs bred (H.E.A.).

H Moor Mill, two broods brought off (W.D.M. *et al.*).

M Ruislip Res., one pair bred successfully (T.L.B.). Present in the breeding season at Poyle and on Staines Moor (W.G.T., C.A.W.).

K A hitherto unrecorded colony estimated (after sample counting and mapping) at 130-150 pairs was discovered during the year by J.F.B. in a ten-acre reed bed on Abbey Wood Marshes. On July 13 the entire area was full of young birds and the population overflowing to near-by ditches (J.S.S.B., J.F.B., G.E.M.). Erith Marshes, five pairs bred in a small Thames-side reed bed; also known to have bred on Plumstead Marshes within the Woolwich Arsenal boundary (J.F.B.). Littlebrook Marsh, near Dartford, heard and seen during the nesting period (W.I.B.). Ruxley G.P., three or four pairs probably bred (F.J.H.). Stone Marshes, a few pairs known to have bred (H.M.P.).

S Barn Elms, one pair bred in the small gravel pit adjacent to the reservoirs (E.M.C.E.). Ham G.P., two pairs nested (F.R.M.). Singing birds were heard during the nesting period at Epsom S.F. (nine pairs, H.B.), Godstone (H.B.) and Richmond Park (H.P.M.).

#### 150 Marsh-Warbler

K Plumstead Marshes, one watched for about three quarters of an hour on June 6 was in an area of tangled vegetation and sang from the top of an elder bush (J.F.B.). Plumage details taken within a few feet of this bird revealed the characteristic white throat and brown upper parts with no markings. The song was described as "sustained, fairly varied, loud and on the whole better than any Reed-Warbler I have heard but not unlike it, and approached the secondary song of Marsh-Warbler described by E. M. Nicholson". It was heard imitating Yellow Wagtail, Common Whitethroat and Hedge-Sparrow. This is the first record for the London Area since 1932.

#### 161 Garden-Warbler

M Inner London: Chelsea, one singing in Upper Cheyne Row on May 16 (E.M.N.); Cripplegate bombed area, one on Apr. 30 (S.D.H.); Hyde Park, one singing on May 16 (E.M.C.E.); Kensington Gardens, one on May 13 and May 18 (E.M.C.E., O.L.M.); Regent's Park, one singing on Sept. 3 (E.M.W.). Inner suburbs, Finchley, a pair bred on glebe land (K.G.H.).

#### 162 Blackcap

M Inner London, St. James's Park, one singing on May 24 (K.V.E.).

S Inner suburbs: Dulwich Wood, noted on passage and one pair bred

(J.S.S.B.); Streatham Common, a singing male on May 25 and a family party on June 14-15 (H.G.A.).

### 163 Whitethroat

M Inner London, noted on spring and autumn passage on City bombed sites and in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens.

S Inner suburbs, Dulwich Wood, one pair bred (J.S.S.B.).

### 164 Lesser Whitethroat

M Inner suburbs: Finchley, bred on glebe land (K.G.H.); Hampstead Heath, parent feeding young on June 29, female with young on Aug. 17 (V.R.G.).

### 184 Blackbird

M Inner London: Green Park, 37 counted on Nov. 6 and 28 on Dec. 18; St. James's Park, 56 counted on Nov. 6 and 51 on Dec. 18; Kensington Gardens, 85 counted on Jan. 23 and 88 on Mar. 13 (S.C., W.G.T.).

S One ringed as young at Wimbledon on 13.v.45 by J.A.W. was shot at Brest, Finistère, on 25.i.49.

### 186/7 Wheatear

Passage through the Area lasted from Mar. 21 to May 30 in the spring, and from Aug. 1 to Oct. 22 in the autumn. As usual, several of the birds were thought to have been probably of the Greenland race.

M Inner London, noted on spring and autumn passage in the City bombed areas, Kensington Gardens, Lord's Cricket Ground and Regent's Park.

### 197 Whinchat

E Chingford, several pairs bred (A.E.J., E.R.P.). Sewardstone, two pairs bred (P.F.C.R.).

H Moor Mill, two pairs bred (W.D.M., E.H.W.). Watford S.F., a young bird on July 13 (W.H.D.W.).

M Near Harefield, one-two pairs bred (E.A.G., H.F.G.). Hendon and Mill Hill, two pairs nested, others present (P.E.L.S., E.H.W.). Perry Oaks-Stanwell-Staines area, of ten pairs present at least six were known to have bred (R.W.H.N., H.P.M., W.N.M. *et al.*). Inner London, City bombed areas, one on May 14-15 (S.D.H., N.J.P.W.).

K Bred on Abbey Wood Marshes (three pairs) and Dartford Marshes (four pairs, J.F.B.). Stone, one pair nested (D.F.O.). Present in the breeding season at Erith, Plumstead and Swanscombe Marshes (J.F.B.).

S Again no breeding records.

### 198 Stonechat

All records received are given. Not more than two pairs were known to have bred in 1949, compared with two or three pairs in 1948 and one in 1947. In the season preceding the excessively cold winter of 1946-47 five nesting pairs were recorded in the Area.

Ten years previously, the *L.B.R.* for 1936 stated (p. 10): "breeds on most of the (Surrey) commons, with a wider distribution in autumn and winter."

- H Rickmansworth, a male and a female on rough ground near Springwell Lake on Jan. 16 (J.A.B.). Watford S.F., a female on Nov. 27 (H.F.G.); a male and a female on Dec. 24, two males and two females on Dec. 27 (W.H.D.W.).
- M Brent Res., from Nov. 6 to Dec. 31, one to five recorded by many observers. Brockley Hill, a bird of the year on Nov. 21 (E.H.W.). A female at last year's breeding area south of Elstrée on Apr. 14 (J.A.B.). Northolt, a pair nested on railway bank (T.L.B.). Stanwell Road, a female on Nov. 6 (E.L.C., H.P.M.). Inner London, Kensington Gardens, an immature on Sept. 14 (E.MCE.).
- K Abbey Wood Marshes, an adult with two juveniles on Aug. 10 (J.F.B.). Elmers End S.F., a female on Nov. 20 (G.E.M.). Swanscombe Marshes, a male on Aug. 7 (J.S.S.B.).
- S Barn Elms Res., a male on Sept. 18 (G.C.L.). Banstead Heath, one on Nov. 21; Beddington S.F., one on Sept. 26; Epsom S.F., a female on Jan. 18 (H.B.). Walton G.P., a male and a female on Dec. 4 and Dec. 18 (D.P.).

### 201 Redstart

- E Nested as usual in Epping Forest (C.E.B.) and at Warley (P.F.C.R.). South Weald Park, two or three seen on July 2 and breeding suspected (R.B.W.).
- H Cuffley Great Wood, five singing males and two females on May 14-15; Hoddesdon Wood, two pairs on May 7 (E.R.G.K.). Wormley Wood, a female on July 9 (E.R.P.).
- M Bushy Park, two pairs bred (E.W.P.). Stanmore Common, two to four pairs bred (E.H.W., W.H.D.W.). Inner London: Cripplegate bombed area, a hen on May 18 (N.J.P.W.); Kensington Gardens, one to two between Sept. 22 and Sept. 25 (E.MCC., G.C.L., O.L.M.).
- K Elmstead Woods, one in song on June 6 but not found subsequently (G.B.). Petts Wood, one on Apr. 15 (R.C.H.) and one singing on July 24 (J.F.B.).
- S Ashtead Woods, one pair bred (A.W.W.). Limpsfield, a pair visiting nesting hole on May 29 (H.F.G.). Richmond Park, at least eight pairs nested (R.W.HN.).

### 202 Black Redstart

See special note on pp. 39-41.

### 223 Sand-Martin

- M Late date, one at Staines Res. on Nov. 6 (W.N.M., C.A.W.; cf. *Handbook*, vol. II, p. 240).

### 225 Swift

For a report on the Swift Enquiry see pp. 49-57.

**227 Nightjar**

- K Darenth Wood, ten pairs nested; four to five pairs were double-brooded (J.F.B., D.F.O.). Hayes, one pair bred and two other pairs frequented the area (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.). Joyden's Wood, one pair probably bred (D.F.O.).
- S Esher Common, three or more present on June 29 (D.P.). Limpsfield Chart, 10-15 males "singing" during the breeding season (J.S.S.B.).

**232 Hoopoe**

- M Hampton Court Park, one seen by Mr Gilkerson on May 11. (A satisfactory description of the bird was submitted to the Committee through E.W.P.). Details have been received of one seen at Stain Hill Res., Sunbury, by H.P.M. on Mar. 30, 1947 (*cf. L.B.R.*, 1947, p. 13).
- S Oxted, remains of one found on July 27, evidently the prey of a Sparrow-Hawk (J.S.S.B.; feathers still in possession of observer). [There were local unconfirmed reports of up to four birds on various lawns in Oxted in April; two were stated to have been present for several weeks.]

**235 Green Woodpecker**

- M/S Inner London: Kensington Gardens, noted Feb.-Mar. and during Nov. (G.C.L., O.L.M., C.H.F.P., T.G.); Battersea Park, one on Jan. 29 (A.M.D.).

**237 Great Spotted Woodpecker**

- M/S Inner London: appears to be increasing (W.G.T. *et al.*); Kensington Gardens, one pair nested (D.F.O.); Battersea Park, a juvenile seen on July 23 (W.G.T.).

**238 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker**

- M Inner London: Kensington Gardens, one on Jan. 4, Feb. 8, 13 and 14 (R.W.H.N., E.M.C.E., O.L.M.); Regent's Park, one in the grounds of Bedford College on May 19 (E.H.W.).

**239 Wryneck**

- E Loughton, seen and heard June to August, a pair together on one occasion; probably bred (C.E.B.).
- H No records.
- M Mill Hill, a migrant stayed for about ten minutes in suburban gardens on Apr. 20 (E.H.W.).
- K Erith, one calling on Apr. 12 (W.I.B.). Orpington, one on Apr. 19 (A.H.B.).
- S Tadworth, two pairs bred (H.B.). Cobham, one on Apr. 9 (D.P.). Leatherhead, one heard between Apr. 15 and May 7 (S.H.C., J.E.S.D.). South Croydon, one on Apr. 16 (F.M.F.).

**249 Little Owl**

M Inner London: Chelsea, one calling near Upper Cheyne Row on Aug. 18 (E.M.N.); Cripplegate bombed area, one on Oct. 7, 12 and 17 (N.J.P.W., E.H.W. *et al.*).

**250 Long-eared Owl**

M Stanmore, one seen in a Scots pine about 2 p.m. on Apr. 23; it hooted several times (E.H.W.). The observer saw the ear-tufts at a range of ten yards.

**251 Short-eared Owl**

S Barn Elms Res., one on Nov. 27 (W.H.D.W.). Satisfactory details have been received. Molesey gravel pits, one seen on Dec. 28, 1946, and on many visits during the early months of 1947, was found shot on Mar. 23, 1947 (H.P.M.).

**254 Barn-Owl**

M Hampton Court Park, young seen but nest not found (E.W.P.).  
K Elmers End Cemetery, one pair bred (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.).

**259 Peregrine Falcon**

M Staines, one frequently recorded from the reservoirs up to Mar. 19 and from Oct. 1 (many observers). Inner London, one watched chasing a Kestrel over Westminster, near the Central Hall, on Oct. 11 (C.H.).

**261 Hobby**

E South Weald Park, one on Oct. 8 at dusk several times attempted to take bats in flight (R.B.W.).  
M Brent Res., one on Apr. 25 (A.G.). Staines Moor and reservoirs, one on Apr. 23 (J.A.B.), one on May 29 (H.P.M.), and one-two seen on seven dates between Aug. 7 and Sept. 25 (E.L.C., H.F.G. *et al.*).

**262 Merlin**

H Colney Street, a male on Mar. 21 (E.H.W.).  
M King George VI. Res., one on Aug. 21 (J.A.B.).

**263 Kestrel**

S Richmond Park, five pairs nested in hollow oaks (R.W.Hn.; *cf.* L.B.R., 1948, p. 16).

**269 Common Buzzard**

K Details have been received of three which passed over Beckenham in wide soaring circles, arriving from the south and making off to the north, gaining height, on Aug. 7 (C.N.W.).

**268/9 Buzzard (species not determined)**

E Hainault Forest, one on Apr. 17 (M.J.A.). Wanstead Park, one on Sept. 26 (A.F.M.).  
M Brent Res., one on Sept. 21 (E.C.O.). Hampstead, one on Apr. 9 (K.D.-S.).



**272/273 Montagu's/Hen Harrier**

M A female or immature near Poyle G.P. on July 24 (A.G.G.T.), and one at Staines Moor on Aug. 25 (P.M.S.J., W.G.T.).

**278 Kite**

E Epping Forest, one, possibly two, over Baldwin's Hill on Apr. 23 (A.V.T.; see also *B.B.*, 42, p. 391, and *L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 17).

**289 Common Heron**

E Little Parndon, three-six pairs nested (D.A.T.M.). Walthamstow Res., 59 occupied nests on Apr. 16 (C.B.A., K.E.H., E.R.P.). Wanstead Park, four pairs nested (G.W.).

M Kempton Park, 71 occupied nests (E.W.P.).

S Gatton Park, seven pairs nested; none nested at Godstone (H.B.) Richmond Park, 12 occupied nests (R.W.H.N.).

The total for the London Area was thus 156-159 occupied nests, compared with 138 in the same heronries in 1948. Continuing the series of combined figures for Walthamstow Res., Wanstead Park, Kempton Park and Richmond Park (*cf.* *L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 17) we have: 1946, 134; 1947, 118; 1948, 122; 1949, 146. W. B. Alexander, in *B.B.*, 43, pp. 78-80, discusses the percentage rise of Heron populations in 1949 over 1948 in various parts of the country. Using the same method (*l.c.*, p. 79, para. 2) we see that the rise in the London Area population is, using the total figures, 14%, and using the figures for the four sample heronries 20%. These percentages are slightly less than Alexander's figures for the Thames Drainage Area (23%), but comparable with those in South-east England. However, the 1949 recovery of London Herons has been more than enough to restore the breeding population to its strength before the damaging cold spell of early 1947.

**297 Bittern**

S Walton-on-Thames, one flushed from reeds at a range of a few feet on Jan. 7 (R.S.M.G.). Satisfactory details have been received.

**301 Bewick's Swan**

M Staines, an immature seen frequently on the reservoirs from Jan. 8 to Jan. 23 (thirteen observers).

**303/7 Grey Geese (species not determined).**

M Inner London, St James's Park, a broken chevron of c. 30 grey geese were seen flying over at about 150 feet on Dec. 23 (T.L.B.).

**314 Canada Goose**

S Cobham, Painshill Park, one pair bred successfully, rearing three young (D.P.).

**315 Sheld-Duck**

- E King George V Res., two on Apr. 11 (A.F.M., K.D.G.M.). A drake and a duck on West Thurrock Marsh on Apr. 1 (M.J.A.).
- M Staines Res., two on six dates from Jan. 2 to Jan. 22 (seven observers). Two to five seen between Staines Res. and Poyle on six dates in May (eight observers); also two flying over the reservoirs on June 5 (J.A.B.).
- K Dartford Marsh, two on Apr. 3 (D.F.O.).
- T Barn Elms Res., one on Mar. 3 and Mar. 6 (R.B., F.J.L.M.).

**318 Gadwall**

- M Edgware, a duck on Canon's Park pond on Jan. 1 (E.H.W.). Staines, Res., three drakes and five ducks on Jan. 22 (J.A.B.).
- T Barn Elms Res., numbers increased from 15 in Jan. to 20 on Feb. 13, and decreased to two or three pairs in May. One pair bred, rearing six young. Autumn figures increased to 12-14 in Aug.-Sept., 20-30 in Oct.-Nov. In December 12-18 were noted.

**319 Teal**

- E Rainham, a drake at Berwick Pond on July 2 (M.J.A.).
- M Staines Res., 250 counted on Jan. 2, c. 400 on Jan. 15, 650 counted on Jan. 22 (J.A.B., C.A.W.).

**322 Garganey**

- E Rainham, one-two between Apr. 3 and May 4; a pair on July 14, four on July 21, 28 and Aug. 29 (M.J.A.). Walthamstow Res., one between May 2 and May 20 (six observers).
- M Poyle, a duck on June 5 (R.dac.); five on Aug. 6 (D.G., H.P.M.). Queen Mary Res., a pair on July 24 (P.A.D.H.). Staines, King George VI Res., a duck on Apr. 20, up to five on several August dates, a drake on Sept. 3 (J.A.B., P.J.H., H.P.M.).

**325 Pintail**

- H Hamper Mill, a drake on Mar. 3 (P.R.K.).
- M Brent Res., a drake and a duck on Jan. 3 (E.C.O.), a duck on Jan. 23 (J.A.B.), and a drake on Feb. 18 (E.H.W.). Queen Mary Res., a drake on Jan. 2 (Duck Census). Staines Res., up to six on various dates, Jan.-Mar. (C.A.W. *et al.*), but five drakes and five ducks on Jan. 18 (H.M.R.K.); a drake and a duck on Oct. 14 (W.H.D.W.), and on King George VI Res. a duck for much of Oct. and Nov. (H.P.M., C.A.W.).
- S Island Barn Res., a drake and a duck on Nov. 20 (D.P.).
- T Barn Elms Res., Lonsdale Road Res. and Thames at Chiswick Eyot, a pair seen frequently between Jan. 1 and Mar. 10 (many observers).

**326 Shoveler**

- M Again nested at Perry Oaks S.F. (*cf. L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 20); at least nine young were brought off (W.N.M., C.A.W.). Inner London, Kensington Gardens, two drakes and two ducks on the Round Pond on May 3 (G.C.L., E.M.C.E. *et al.*).

**328 Pochard**

- M Poyle, a pair on June 16 (R.W.H.N.). Brent Res., max. 505 on Dec. 11 (P.M.S.J., W.G.T.). One ringed in St. James's Park on 3.ii.49 was recovered there on 26.x.49, and another ringed in the park on 31.x.46 was shot at Peterborough S.F. on 21.xi.49.
- K Stone Marshes, may have bred: a drake on June 19, two drakes on July 13, an adult and three immatures on July 21, a drake in eclipse on Aug. 14 (J.F.B., H.M.P.; cf. *L.B.R.*, 1947, p. 17).
- T Barn Elms Res., over 600 on Jan. 2 (W.G.T.); 33, mostly drakes, on June 30 (A.G.G.T.).

**330 Tufted Duck**

- E Rainham, two pairs on May 4 (M.J.A.). Walthamstow Res., 74 drakes and 62 ducks as late as Apr. 23 (Duck Census); two pairs seen with young on Aug. 6 (H.W.R.).
- H Old Parkbury, a pair reared four young (W.D.M., E.H.W.).
- M Poyle, a duck sitting on six eggs, July 10; a duck and a young bird on July 24 (D.G., H.P.M.). Staines, a duck with eight young on King George VI Res. on July 24 (C.A.W.).

**331 Scaup-Duck.**

- E King George V Res., a duck on Oct. 30 (P.F.C.R.).
- M Brent Res., a drake on Jan. 5 (E.H.W.). Hampton, one daily from Mar. 5-12 (E.M.G., E.W.P.). Staines Res., a drake on Jan. 18 (H.M.R.K.), two drakes and three ducks on Jan. 19 (R.S.M.G.).
- T Barn Elms Res., single birds on Jan. 1, Feb. 18, Aug. 2, Nov. 19, Dec. 2, and two on Aug. 28 (G.C.L., J.MCH., H.P.M., L.M.). Lonsdale Road Res., two on Nov. 20 (A.W.).

**332 Goldeneye**

- M Staines, a maximum of 54 (an unusually large number) on the reservoirs on Jan. 2 (C.A.W.).

**334 Long-tailed Duck**

- M Staines Res., details have been received of a drake on Jan. 22 and Feb. 12 (H.A.B.).

**339 Common Scoter**

- M Brent Res., a drake on Nov. 28 (H.P.M., E.H.W.). Staines, a drake on Oct. 23 (J.A.B., H.P.M.); two immature drakes on King George VI Res. on Aug. 6 (R.H.M.R., C.A.W.).
- S Wimbledon Common, a drake alighted on the Beverley Brook in the mid-afternoon of Feb. 9, 1947 (during the cold spell), and was still present, apparently semi-exhausted, at dusk (H.P.M.).
- T Barn Elms Res., two on Feb. 28 and Mar. 29 (R.B., J.MCH.), one on July 17 (G.C.L.), and one on Nov. 20 (M.C., H.P.M., D.E.P., A.W.). Thames at Kew, a drake on Apr. 23 (T.H.L.M.).

**340 Velvet-Scoter**

- M Staines Res., two drakes on the unusual date of July 7 (H.P.M.). Satisfactory field notes have been received.

**342 Goosander**

- M Maxima 34 on Staines Res., Jan. 22 (J.A.B.) and c. 40 on Queen Mary Res., Jan. 26 (R.W.HN.).  
 K Beckenham, Kelsey Park, a brown-headed bird on Jan. 29 (R.S.A.).  
 S Maxima 80 on Island Barn Res. on Jan. 1 and 34 at West Molesey Res. on Mar. 5 (Duck Census).

**344 Smew**

- M Brent Res., frequently seen from January to early March in numbers up to c. 40 (many observers); nine drakes and 44 others on Jan. 23 (J.A.B.). Staines Res., maximum nine drakes and 17 others on Jan. 9 (J.A.B., C.A.W.). Ashford, 14 on a gravel pit on Jan. 1 (Duck Census). Bushy Park, one on Heron Pond, Feb. 27 (E.W.P.). A duck summered in the Staines area (many observers).  
 K Swanscombe Marshes, two brown-headed birds on Dec. 11 (J.F.B.).  
 S Ham G.P., five on Jan. 1, five on Mar. 5 (F.R.M.). Walton Res., six on Jan. 1, four on Mar. 5 (Duck Census).  
 T Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road Res., maximum 41 (13 drakes) on Jan. 1 (Duck Census). River Thames at Kew, two on Feb. 16, 17, 20 (M.C., F.D., B.A.R.).

**346 Cormorant**

- E King George V Res., one on Mar. 22 (P.F.C.R.). Walthamstow Res., one on Oct. 1-2 was found dead on Oct. 3 (W.C.D., E.T.N.). West Thurrock, one on Apr. 1 (M.J.A.).  
 H Rickmansworth, an immature on Stocker's Lake on several dates from Oct. 29 to Nov. 27 (E.A.G., H.F.G., P.M.S.J., W.G.T.).  
 M Fifteen records from the Thames valley reservoirs and gravel pits, March-May, July-Dec.: maxima four on Mar. 19 and May 21, seven on Oct. 23.  
 M/S Inner London: St James's Park, three pinioned birds were introduced in May, but single birds seen flying over on Feb. 19 and on Nov. 10 and 18 were wild (T.L.B., W.G.T.); Somerstown, one over Charrington Street, N.W.1, on Aug. 23 (M.R.J.); Thames, one on the river at Westminster on Sept. 8 (P.M.S.J., W.G.T.) and one flying over London Bridge on Nov. 13 (C.B.A.).  
 K Greenwich Marshes, one on June 2 (J.F.B.). Stone Marshes, one on Dec. 8 and Dec. 30 (H.M.P.).  
 S Walton Res., one on Dec. 10 (D.P.). Weybridge, one on Apr. 14 (R.S.M.G.).  
 T Barn Elms Res. and Thames at Kew, up to seven, Jan.-Mar.; one to three, Aug.-Dec.

**349 Gannet**

- M Kempton Park reservoirs, an adult female seen on Oct. 26-27 was found dead on Oct. 28 (G.B.S., E.W.P., D.T.).

**351 Leach's Fork-tailed Petrel**

- B One was found dead at Chalfont Park, on the edge of the Society's Area near Gerrards Cross, on Dec. 24, 1948 (C. J. Smithells in *Country Life*, 14.i.49). The record was supported by a photograph.

M Staines Res., one on Jan. 7 (A.E.E., H.R.M.-B., J.R.R.) and one on Nov. 13 (W.N.M., C.A.W.). Excellent views were enjoyed and full descriptions submitted of both these birds.

### 370 Great Crested Grebe

For a report on the annual breeding season census, fourth successive year, see p. 38.

### 371 Red-necked Grebe

T Barn Elms Res., one on Jan. 22 (G.C.L.) and Feb. 9 (W.R.P.).

### 373 Slavonian Grebe

H Aldenham Res., one on Jan. 30; Rickmansworth, one at Stocker's Lake on Jan. 16 (J.A.B.).

T Barn Elms Res., one on Dec. 11 (G.C.L., J.MCH.).

### 374 Black-necked Grebe

E Walthamstow Res., one on Aug. 21 (H.W.R.).

H Aldenham Res., one on Jan. 23, 25, 29, 30 (W.D.M., E.H.W.). In view of the similarity in dates of this and the Slavonian Grebe record (above), details have been obtained and the presence of both species confirmed.

M Brent Res., one on Jan. 14 (E.H.W.) and one on Aug. 29 (E.C.O.). Staines Res., 1/2 on Jan. 1, 8, 22; one on Mar. 30; two in summer plumage on Apr. 10, May 25, 28, and on July 17; most frequently recorded (35 dates) between August and December inclusive, up to five or six being seen in each month. The numbers on autumn passage at Staines were, however, smaller than those of previous years (*cf.* *L.B.R.*, 1945-48).

T Barn Elms Res., one on Feb. 2 (H.M.R.K.) and one on July 26 (A.G.G.T.).

### 375 Little Grebe

M Autumn flocking was particularly noticeable at the Brent Res., where up to 31 were seen in August, 35-42 throughout September, 20 in October (E.R.G.K., E.H.W.). Inner London, 12 adults and three young on the lake in the grounds of Buckingham Palace, Aug. 19 (C.H.).

### 376 Great Northern Diver

M Brent Res., an immature from Nov. 26 to the end of December (20 observers). This is the first record for the London Area for ten years (*cf.* *L.B.R.*, 1939, p. 19).

### 383 Turtle-Dove

M Inner London, Kensington, one on June 6, Aug. 24 and Sept. 2 (E.MACA.).

K Dartford Marshes, 150-200 seen feeding amongst dredged material from the River Darent on Aug. 14 (J.F.B.).

**386 Bar-tailed Godwit**

H Aldenham Res., one in summer plumage on July 7 (E.H.W.).  
M Perry Oaks S.F., two flying over on May 8 (W.N.M.).

**387 Black-tailed Godwit**

M Perry Oaks S.F., one on Apr. 24 (W.N.M.).

**388 Common Curlew**

The year's records fall into two clearly-defined passage periods: Mar. 19-May 12, July 9-Sept. 18; the movement being especially marked between the last week of July and the first week of September. Frequently the birds were seen only in flight, or heard flying over after dark, though occasionally they were found pausing at various inland waters or along the Thames. For example, a party of 19 arrived at King George VI Res. from the S.E. on Aug. 20 and remained at the water's edge for a few minutes before flying off to the S.W. One-two were seen on June 19 (Kent), Oct. 14 (Surrey) and Nov. 4 (Essex).

**389 Whimbrel**

E Walthamstow Res., one on May 14 (D.J.BN., K.E.H.). W. Thurrock Marsh, one on July 9 (M.J.A.).

H Totteridge, heard passing over in the evening of Aug. 2 (E.R.G.K.).

M Mill Hill, heard passing over after dark on May 12 (W.D.M.). Perry Oaks S.F., three on July 25 (H.P.M.). Staines Moor and reservoirs, single birds on Apr. 24, May 12, Aug. 7 and Aug. 27-28 (E.L.C., D.G., R.W.HN., H.P.M., C.A.W.).

T Barn Elms Res., one on Apr. 13 (R.S.B.).

**393 Woodcock**

M Brent Res., one on July 25 in a swampy patch on the south side (E.C.O.). Bushy Park, single birds on three dates in Jan., on Oct. 29, Nov. 11, Dec. 20, 29 (R.M.). Hampstead, one on East Heath on Mar. 21 (V.R.G.). Inner London, Brompton, one found dead in Redcliffe Gardens on Mar. 2 (D.F.O.).

K Darenth Wood, one in flight on July 27 (J.F.B.). Keston, Holwood Park, one on Feb. 20 (E.H.H.). Stone Marshes, three on Nov. 23 and one on Dec. 7 (H.M.P.).

S Carshalton, one disturbed from large suburban gardens on Nov. 20 (C.B.A.). Esher Common, one on Feb. 6 (D.P.). Near Mickleham, one feeding on bank of R. Mole on Aug. 27 (D.S.W.). Wimbledon Common, one on Feb. 5 (H.P.M.).

**395 Common Snipe**

M Inner London, St. James's Park, one seen to alight on Duck Island on Nov. 21 (D.C.).

**398 Jack Snipe**

E Abridge, one at gravel pits on Jan. 11 (A.F.M.).

H Colney Street, one to three at Moor Mill in Jan., Mar., Apr., July, Oct., Nov., Dec. (W.D.M., E.H.W.; cf. *L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 24).

M Hampstead, one on Heath Extension on Mar. 13 (v.R.G.). Staines, one on the Moor on Mar. 19 (P.J.H.) and Dec. 7 (H.P.M.), and one on bare shingle of the almost-empty King George VI Res. on Oct. 8 (J.A.B.).

K Elmers End S.F., two seen on several dates from January until the end of March (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.).

S Dulwich Common, one flushed from a marshy area on Jan. 29 (H.E.P.).

#### 401 Red-necked Phalarope

M Staines, one on King George VI Res. on Aug. 1 and 2 (E.L.C., C.H.S., H.P.M., W.N.M., C.A.W.); this appears to be the first record for the county and for the London Area. Very full field notes have been submitted by C.A.W.

#### 402 Turnstone

M Staines Res., one on May 15 (E.S.J.). Perry Oaks S.F., seven on June 5 (J.A.B., P.J.H., W.N.M.). One to three recorded from Perry Oaks S.F. and King George VI Res. on four dates in August (E.L.C., H.P.M.).

#### 403 Knot

M Single birds at the Brent Res. on Sept. 25 (E.H.W.) and Oct. 1 (A.G.); at Perry Oaks S.F. on July 18 (H.P.M.) and Aug. 4-7 (E.L.C., R.S.H., C.H.S., C.A.W.); at Staines Res. on Mar. 20 (P.D.) and Oct. 23 (J.A.B., H.P.M.).

#### 404/5 Dunlin

E Chingford Res., two on Apr. 10 (A.E.J.). Walthamstow Res., one on May 11 and one on May 28 (D.V.F., K.E.H.). King George V Res., four on Sept. 17 (A.F.M.).

H Moor Mill, one on July 13-14 (E.H.W.).

M Brent Res., one on Aug. 12 (E.C.O.), four on Sept. 4 and one on Sept. 18 (E.H.W.). Queen Mary Res., four on Aug. 21 (P.A.D.H.). Perry Oaks S.F. and the Staines reservoirs, very many records: noted in all months except Feb., June and Dec., but chiefly Apr.-May, July-Oct.; spring max. 18 at Perry Oaks on May 28 (C.H.S.); autumn max. 29 at the same place on Aug. 5 (H.P.M.), but 15-22 repeatedly seen there from Aug. 1-11, and up to 15 at King George VI Res., Oct.-Nov.

K Crayford Creek, one on July 29; Dartford Marshes, two on Aug. 11 (J.F.B., W.I.B.).

S Epsom S.F., one on Aug. 4 (A.W.W.).

T Barn Elms Res., up to four between Mar. 13 and May 18, and two on Nov. 19 (many observers).

#### 406 Curlew-Sandpiper

M Noted by ten observers at Perry Oaks S.F. and the Staines reservoirs on autumn passage only: one to six on several dates between Sept. 4 and Sept. 26.

**407 Little Stint**

M King George VI Res., two on Sept. 22 (W.N.M.). Staines Res., four on Sept. 25 (J.A.B., H.P.M.).

T Barn Elms Res., one on May 17 (A.G.G.T.).

**409 Temminck's Stint**

M Staines Moor, one on Apr. 27 (E.H.W.); full and careful field notes have been submitted, the yellowish legs and rippling call in particular being noted.

**416 Sanderling**

M Brent Res., one on Sept. 25 and one on Oct. 19 (E.H.W.). Perry Oaks S.F. and the Staines reservoirs, many records of single birds between July 17 and Sept. 7 (J.A.B., H.A.B., H.P.M., W.N.M., C.A.W.), but four on Aug. 4 at Perry Oaks (S.A.); the only spring records are of two (possibly more) at Perry Oaks on May 28 (P.J.H., C.H.S., H.P.M.) and five at King George VI Res. on May 7 (R.dac.).

T Barn Elms Res., one on Mar. 23 and Apr. 1, two on May 5, three on May 18-19 (K.V.E., J.MCH., F.J.L.M., H.P.M., A.G.G.T., A.W.W.).

**417 Ruff**

H Moor Mill, two on July 14 (E.H.W.).

M Many autumn but no spring records: Brent Res., two on Sept. 4 (E.H.W.); Perry Oaks S.F. and the Staines reservoirs, a very long passage, from July 3 to Oct. 16, in numbers up to four (many observers); two ruffs were seen swimming in two feet of water at King George VI Res. on Sept. 25 (H.P.M.).

S East Molesey S.F., one on Mar. 26 (B.A.R.). Island Barn Res., five on Oct. 12 (G.C.L., J.MCH.).

**421 Common Sandpiper**

From a very large volume of records from many observers the duration and size of the spring and autumn passage movements through the Area generally can be appreciated. There are also, as usual, a few winter records.

*Spring passage:* This occurred between Apr. 6 and May 26, a steady but unspectacular movement revealed for the most part only by single birds and parties up to four, except for 9-10 at Walthamstow on May 9 and May 16.

*Autumn passage:* Beginning with singles and parties up to six from July 8 until nearly the end of the month, this movement became more pronounced in late July and in August and September, birds being recorded on almost every day and parties and totals of 8-21 being commonly noted in many localities. By the last week of September the passage was almost over, though one to three were noted irregularly until Oct. 15.

*Winter records:* One at Staines and at Kew on Nov. 20; one to three on Stone Marshes, Dec. 3/4; one at Barn Elms on Dec. 10 and at Isleworth Ferry on Dec. 18.



**423 Wood-Sandpiper**

H Watford S.F., one with Green Sandpipers on Aug. 13 (W.H.D.W.).  
 M Perry Oaks S.F., one almost daily from July 27 to Aug. 6 (E.L.C., E.A.G., H.F.G., C.H.S., H.P.M., A.G.G.T., C.A.W.); one on Aug. 12 and Aug. 23 (H.A.B., P.J.H.) and one on Sept. 24 (C.B.A.). Poyle, one on July 24 was seen to swim in deep water (E.L.C., H.P.M., C.A.W.).

**424 Green Sandpiper**

*Spring passage*: Occasionally seen until May 16 in widely separated localities. The largest numbers were five at Watford S.F. (Herts.) on Mar. 20 and ten there on Apr. 3, but whether these were passage or wintering birds (see below) is uncertain.

*Autumn passage*: One on July 3, followed by almost daily records between July 13 and Sept. 29, with stragglers on five dates in October, the last being two-three on Oct. 30. Favoured localities were Watford S.F., the Perry Oaks-Staines area of Middlesex, and the Thames marshes of N.W. Kent. Usually the birds were seen singly, or in parties up to three or four, very occasionally up to eight. The largest numbers occurred around Aug. 11-13, when 14 were seen at Littlebrook Marsh (Kent) and ten at Watford S.F.

*Winter records*: One at Rickmansworth (Herts.) on Jan. 16. One-two at King George VI Res. (Middx.) and Watford S.F. on Nov. 20, 27, and noted in the Staines area and elsewhere on twelve dates between Dec. 4 and Dec. 30. The largest numbers were again at Watford S.F.: two on 10th, five on 17th, eight on 24th, three on 27th.

**431 Spotted Redshank**

E Walthamstow Res., one on Aug. 6 (H.W.R.).

H Watford S.F., one on Aug. 13 (W.H.D.W.).

M Perry Oaks S.F., five on Aug. 14 (D.F.O.); five seen at King George VI Res. (two miles S.W.) the same day by J.A.B. and E.L.C. may well have been the same birds. One at King George VI Res. on Sept. 9 (H.P.M.).

**432 Greenshank**

E Rainham, four on Berwick Pond on Aug. 28 (M.J.A.). Walthamstow Res., two on Aug. 21 (H.W.R.).

H Moor Mill, two on Aug. 23 (P.E.L.S.). Watford S.F., one on Aug. 13 and one on Sept. 3 (W.H.D.W.); five on Aug. 21 (W.D.M.).

M Brent Res., one on May 9-11 (A.G.) and one on May 18 (E.R.G.K.); one on Sept. 4 (E.H.W.). Staines area, one to three on several days from Apr. 18 to May 16 (eight observers); in the autumn single birds were noted on July 16, 19, 30, but the main passage occurred between Aug. 14 and Sept. 9, when one to eight were seen almost daily (many observers).

(It is interesting to note from the rest of the 1949 records for other districts and counties that these weeks Aug. 13/14-Sept. 7 saw the main passage through the London Area generally.)

- K Littlebrook Marsh, one on July 15 and Sept. 3 (w.I.B.).  
 S Richmond Park, one on Aug. 21 (R.W.HN.) and two on Aug. 22 (E.G.P.).  
 T Barn Elms Res., two on Aug. 13 (P.M.S.J., W.G.T.).

#### 435/6 Ringed Plover

- E King George V Res., one on Sept. 17 (A.F.M.). W. Thurrock Marsh, a pair on Apr. 1 (M.J.A.).  
 H Moor Mill, two on July 13 (E.H.W.).  
 M Brent Res., four on Aug. 25 (D.V.F.), an immature from Aug. 29 to Sept. 8 and two on Sept. 26 (E.C.O.). Perry Oaks S.F., spring passage from Mar. 27 to June 8 (many observers), maximum ten on May 28 (C.HS.). Autumn passage through the Perry Oaks-Staines area lasted from July 9 to Oct. 23, the main concentration occurring at Perry Oaks S.F. from Aug. 4-16, where numbers rose from 12/14 to 33 by the 10th and 73 on the 11th, then 40/50 until the 15th, 24 on the 16th.  
 K Swanscombe Marshes, six on Aug. 23 (F.J.H.).  
 T Barn Elms Res., two on Apr. 4 (J.MCH) and one on Aug. 18 (H.P.M.).

#### 438 Little Ringed Plover

In 1949, certainly nine and probably fourteen pairs of Little Ringed Plovers nested in the London Area, about the same number as in 1948. A full account of the occurrences is given in the report for the whole country in *B.B.*, 43, 279-284, and the following is a brief summary only:—

- E Six pairs frequented one site, as in 1948. The first arrival was a single bird on Mar. 27. Two nests, of different pairs, were found and two of the other pairs were seen with chicks.  
 At another locality at least four pairs are believed to have been present. Five well-developed chicks were found on May 26; two were together but the rest were in different parts of the pit and from the number and behaviour of the adults present it was considered that the young belonged to four distinct broods.  
 H Two seen at a gravel pit on Apr. 23 may have been the birds which occurred at Tring the next day. At another pit three seen on July 9 remained until July 14.  
 M The completion of the King George VI Reservoir, the gravelly bed of which was the main stronghold of Little Ringed Plovers in Middlesex in 1946-47, and the filling-in of many gravel pits has caused a decrease in the species in Middlesex. In 1949, a pair bred at each of three localities and possibly at a fourth; seven chicks are known to have hatched successfully.  
 K One was seen on May 5 and May 8, but not subsequently, at the pit where nesting occurred in 1947.  
 S Two were seen by the Pen Ponds, Richmond Park, on July 16

#### 440/1 Golden Plover

- E Rainham, c. 100 by Berwick Pond on Feb. 1 (M.J.A.). Sewardstone, c. 250 on Mar. 6 (P.F.C.R.).

- H Near Aldenham Res., 18 on Jan. 29-30 and Feb. 2 (W.D.M., E.H.W.). N. Mimms—London Colney, 150-200 on Oct. 24-25 (S.K.). Moor Mill, 25 on Dec. 18 (W.D.M.). Old Parkbury, 18 on Dec. 10 (E.H.W.). Radlett Airfield, 19 on Jan. 29 and one on Mar. 5 (W.D.M.); numbers up to c. 250 on several dates from Nov. 10 to the end of Dec. (D.V.F., A.G., W.D.M., E.H.W., W.H.D.W.). Watford By-pass, 38 on Jan. 30 (J.A.B.).
- M Hendon, six on Jan. 30 and one on Feb. 20, on the airfield (E.H.W.). S. Mimms, 11 on Mar. 11 (E.H.W.). Staines—E. Bedfont area, numbers up to 140 seen on several dates from Jan. 1 to Mar. 19 (many observers); 48 on Staines Moor on Dec. 11 (E.L.C., C.H.S.).
- K Erith Marshes, one on Jan. 6 (L.M.). Northfleet, c. 50 on Jan. 9 (K.H.H.).
- S Beddington S.F., three on Mar. 6 (B.M.). Leatherhead, parties heard flying over at night, Apr. 11 (J.E.S.D.). Richmond Park, c. 30 on Mar. 6 (D.A.R.).

#### 444 Grey Plover

- H Moor Mill, one on Nov. 20 (E.M.C.E., W.D.M.).  
T Barn Elms Res., one on Nov. 6 and Nov. 26 (M.C., E.M.C.E., R.S.H.).

#### 449 Lapwing

- M Inner London, one flying low over Sloane Square on Feb. 7 (P.J.H.).

#### 451 Avocet

- E Barking, two at Mayesbrook Park G.P. on Mar. 28 remained from about 2 p.m. until nightfall but were gone next morning (H.T.). Excellent views were enjoyed of the birds in flight and feeding. Supporting details have been received for this record, the first for the London Area since June 1932 (Brooklands S.F., Surrey: *L.B.R.*, 1943, p. 27).

#### 452 Oystercatcher

- M Staines, King George VI Res., one on July 28 (R.S.M.G.) and two on Aug. 6 (C.H.S., C.A.W.).

#### 462 Black Tern

An account of the passage of Black Terns in the country generally in the spring of 1949 is given in *B.B.*, 43, pp. 177-179.

*Spring passage*:—

- E Walthamstow Res., up to 16 on May 14-15 (D.J.BN., W.C.D., E.T.N.).  
E.T.N.).
- H Aldenham Res., nine on May 14 and three-four on May 15 (E.A.G., H.F.G., E.R.G.K., E.H.W.).
- M Brent Res., one on May 13 (D.V.F.). Staines, one on Apr. 17, 18 (J.A.B., B.A.R., P.F.Y.), five on May 3 (E.H.W.), one on May 4 (H.P.M.); seen daily from May 11-15 in numbers from one to fifteen (many observers); one on May 22 (B.S.M.).
- S Walton G.P., one on June 18 (D.G.H.).
- T Barn Elms Res., two on May 12, 11-15 on May 13-15, two on May 17, 22 (many observers).

*Autumn passage:—*

E Walthamstow Res., one on Aug. 21 (H.W.R.).

M Queen Mary Res., one on July 24 (P.A.D.H.). Staines, single birds on Aug. 24, Sept. 3, 5, 17, 20 (many observers), and a notable "wave" on Sept. 4 when 27 were counted (C.A.W.).

**467 Sandwich Tern**

E Walthamstow Res., one on May 14, 15 (W.C.D., E.T.N.).

M Staines, two on Aug. 25 (P.M.S.J., W.G.T.), two on Sept. 1 (P.F.Y.) and one on Sept. 5 (E.G.P.).

S Ham G.P., one on May 4 (F.R.M.).

**469/470 Common/Arctic Terns**

Reported in small numbers on passage from nine widely separated localities in all counties.

*Spring passage:* With the exception of one bird seen at Staines (Middx.) on June 18, the evidence of spring passage was confined to the period May 1 to May 22 (ten dates). Usually only ones and twos were detected, but c. 12 were seen at Chingford Res. (Essex) on May 1 and eight at Staines on May 14.

*Autumn passage:* Noted between Aug. 6 and Sept. 22 (15 dates), and Oct. 19-30 (six dates); again usually in ones and twos, but at Staines ten were seen on Aug. 6 and four on Aug. 21. On Sept. 4, at King George VI. Res., c. 20 first seen at 11 a.m. were joined by fresh arrivals from the north until by 12.30 p.m. 114 were counted settled on the water. Shortly afterwards the flock dispersed and by 1 p.m. only ten remained (P.J.H.).

**471 Little Tern**

M Staines Res., one on May 3 (E.H.W.). King George VI Res., one on Sept. 5 (E.G.P.).

**478 Black-headed Gull**

M Perry Oaks S.F., 287 nests counted on May 28, and many young seen on the wing on July 3 (C.A.W.).

The following recoveries of birds ringed by T. L. Bartlett were notified in 1949:

<i>Date and place of ringing.</i>	<i>Date and place of recovery.</i>
6.xi.46—St. James's Park .....	29.xi.48—Gravesend, Kent.
30.i.47—St. James's Park .....	16.i.49—Corby, Northants.
27.ii.44—Hammersmith .....	21.i.49—Where ringed.
26.ii.43—St. James's Park .....	19.ii.49—Victoria Emb. (dead).
12.xi.47—Victoria Embankment .....	20.ii.49—Barn Elms Res.
22.i.47—Victoria Embankment .....	25.v.49—Vejen, Jutland.
13.ii.43—Westminster Bridge .....	—vii.49—Woodrising (near Scoulton Mere), Norfolk.
30.i.47—St. James's Park .....	31.xi.49—Where ringed.
1.iii.44—St. James's Park .....	10.xii.49—Where ringed.

On Feb. 4 several Black-headed Gulls attacked a Little Grebe which was laboriously crossing the ice of the frozen pond in Danson Park, Kent. Their attention attracted by its flopping progress, interrupted by frequent slips and falls, the gulls repeatedly dived on it and pecked at it, even taking it up and dropping it back on the ice from a height of four or five feet. Eventually the grebe reached the open water and escaped (W.I.B.). The *Handbook* mentions small *passeres*, tern chicks and ducklings as being occasionally taken.

#### 484/5 Lesser Black-backed Gull

Winter records this year (Jan.-Feb., Nov.-Dec.) are from 16 widely separated localities; maximum nine at Hampton Filter Beds on Dec. 30 (*cf. L.B.R.*, 1936-48).

#### 486 Great Black-backed Gull

Noted at all seasons. There is evidence of increasing numbers on the Thames in winter in recent years, and we hope to publish details in the *L.B.R.* for 1950. The roost at Hampton Filter Beds, Middlesex (*cf. L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 30) continued in 1949: Jan.-Apr., maxima 54 on Jan. 4, 30 on Apr. 12; Sept.-Dec., maxima 117 on Dec. 14, 88 on Dec. 30 (E.W.P.). The largest flock elsewhere in the Area was of 38 at Epsom S.F., Surrey, on Jan. 18 (H.B.).

#### 487/8 Glaucous and Iceland Gulls

In the introductory remarks on these species in the *L.B.R.* for 1949, pp. 30-31, we gave some indication of the difficulties of identifying Glaucous and Iceland Gulls in the field. Since then we have corresponded at length with Mr G. T. Kay of Lerwick, Shetland, and have seen three of his ciné films in colour of both species, as well as some recent unpublished photographs. The result has been that we have come to know a little more about the field identification of these difficult birds (though admittedly by proxy) and we feel that the subsequent showing of the films to the Ornithological Section at one of its meetings on July 25, 1950, must have given those who saw them a better idea of the main points of difference than would have been possible from written descriptions or from the observation of occasional birds in the London Area. This is especially desirable as the value of future records depends on the extent to which our observers appreciate the difficulties and know precisely the special points to watch for. We are greatly indebted to Mr Kay for his helpful response to our requests for information and for the loan of the films.

From the following chronological summary of the year's records it will be seen that between January and April at least two different and undisputed Glaucous Gulls occurred, and one or perhaps two probable Iceland Gulls. An Adult Glaucous Gull was seen in November.

There are also several records of birds which must be referred to as Glaucous/Iceland, either because of insufficient field notes or

because of unfavourable conditions for observation rather than for the possibility of their having been small ("border-line") examples of the Glaucous Gull. There is nothing in the dates or plumage descriptions to have prevented birds (a) and (f); (b) and (c), (g), (h); (d) and (e) being the same, and it cannot therefore be said with certainty that more than three individuals occurred up to April. Very full notes of the probable Iceland Gull(s) are on the Society's files and have been discussed by the Committee. If condensed for publication they would be of little value; to publish them fully would make great demands on our space.

- (a) Jan. 14-19, Epsom S.F., 1 probable Iceland, immature (C.B.A., H.B.).
- (b) Jan. 15, Barn Elms Res., 1 definite Glaucous, immature, noticeably larger than Herring-Gulls (R.W.H.N.).
- (c) Jan. 21-23, Thames, Putney, 1 Glaucous/Iceland, immature (J.P.).
- (d) Feb. 5, 6, Thames, Putney, 1 Glaucous/Iceland, adult or near adult, probably Glaucous from head and bill (J.P.).
- (e) Feb. 26, Lonsdale Rd. Res., 1 definite Glaucous, adult or near adult, as large as or larger than G.B.B. Gulls (R.B., P.F.C.R.).
- (f) Mar. 12, 13, 16, Barn Elms Res., 1 very probable Iceland, immature (J.S.S.B., R.B., F.J.L.M., B.A.R.).
- (g) Apr. 3, Dartford Marsh, 1 Glaucous/Iceland, immature, probably Glaucous from size (K.H.H., D.F.O.).
- (h) Apr. 12, Thames, Westminster, 1 Glaucous/Iceland, immature, seen in flight only (R.H.M.R.).
- (i) Nov. 21, 22, St James's Park, 1 definite Glaucous, adult, larger than near-by Herring-Gull (T.L.B., D.C.).

#### 489 Kittiwake

M Brent Res., an adult on Dec. 17 (R.S.H.). Staines Res., an adult on May 3 (E.H.W.).

#### 493 Arctic Skua

M Staines Res., an immature on Oct. 9 (W.N.M., C.A.W.); fully descriptive field notes have been submitted; one on Oct. 14 (W.H.D.W.), the description of which leaves little doubt that it was the same bird.

#### 503 Puffin

M Stanwell, an immature was picked up by the police on Oct. 30 and sent to Dr Ludwig Koch, who presented it to the Zoo (C.H.S.).

S Surrey Commercial Docks, an oiled bird found on Nov. 7 was cleaned and later taken to the Zoo (W.L.M.).

#### 504 Corn-Crake

S Carshalton, one found dead in a suburban garden on Sept. 15 (H.G.A.).

**509 Water-Rail**

- E Rainham, seen at Berwick Pond as follows: three or four on Feb. 1, one on Mar. 24, two on Aug. 28, two on Dec. 27, 28 (M.J.A.).
- H Moor Mill, one seen or heard in Jan., Mar., Apr., May, Sept., Oct. (W.D.M., B.S., E.H.W.); two seen there on Dec. 23, 27; absent in July and August, but one nearer Old Parkbury in July when Moor Mill haunt was dried up (E.H.W.). Rickmansworth, one seen near Stocker's Lake on Nov. 7 (E.A.G.) and one heard there on Nov. 20 (P.M.S.J., W.G.T.). West Hyde, one on Jan. 16 (J.A.B.)
- M Isleworth, one found freshly dead in the playground of The Green School for Girls on Oct. 10 (G.A.H.).
- K Crayford Creek, one on Feb. 7 (W.I.B.). Lullingstone, a dead bird on Mar. 20 (J.S.S.B.). Ruxley G.P., up to three seen on various dates in Feb., Mar., Sept. and Oct. (J.F.B., F.J.H., D.F.O.).
- S Barn Elms Res., one noted in the gravel pit on various dates between Jan. 6 and Apr. 13 (many observers). Beddington S.F., one on Jan. 13 (D.E.P.) and one on June 5 (B.M.).

**518 Common Partridge**

- M Inner London, one in the gardens of the Natural History Museum on Apr. 7 (D.G.).

**519 Red-legged Partridge**

- B At least three pairs near Iver in the breeding season (H.A.B., A.V.T.).
- E Rainham, a pair by Berwick Pond on May 16 (M.J.A.).
- H Old Parkbury, a pair on and near the old gravel workings on May 7 (E.H.W.).
- M Bushy and Hampton Court Parks, one at intervals from June 12 to Oct. 22 (E.W.P.). Several records of small numbers from Harefield, and many records from the Staines-Perry Oaks area (many observers); c. 15 on Staines Moor on Nov. 13 (R.S.M.G.); bred near Staines (C.A.W.). Harlington, a pair had two broods (H.A.B.).
- K Thames-side marshes, regularly seen throughout the year; a pair with 12 young were seen at Stone on July 16 (J.F.B., W.I.B., D.F.O.). Darenth Wood, a pair on July 21; Shoreham, a pair on May 21 (D.F.O.).

**520 Quail**

- M Wood Green, one found injured in Green Lanes on Aug. 31 was kept until Sept. 10 and released (W.R.R.). A satisfactory description has been submitted.

# The Census of Great Crested Grebes 1949

Report by E. R. PARRINDER

**I**N 1949, for the fourth year in succession, a census was made of Great Crested Grebes (*Podiceps cristatus*) in the London Area as part of the ten year sample census organised by the British Trust for Ornithology. The total number of adult Great Crested Grebes counted in 1949 was 393, an increase of 12 over the number counted in 1948. A few gravel pits in the Lea Valley were not counted in 1949; and if these are excluded from the 1948 total, the 1949 figures show an increase of 7%. The Great Crested Grebe in the London Area has thus maintained the recovery, achieved in 1948, from the serious effects of the 1946-7 cold spell.

It is hoped to publish a summary of the first five years of the census in the *L.B.R.* for 1950. In the meantime three interesting trends brought out in the 1949 results may be briefly considered.

In the three years 1946 to 1948 most of the Grebes counted were at gravel pits, but many of the pits opened up in the war years, especially in south-west Middlesex, are now rapidly being filled and used as housing sites. In consequence, the Grebes are forced to seek other habitats and, for the first time in the present census, more Grebes were counted at lakes and reservoirs than at pits.

Possibly as a result of the decrease in south-west Middlesex, a big increase was recorded in Surrey where the combined total for gravel pits and other waters was 65% more than in 1948. The Pen Ponds in Richmond Park were colonised by two pairs, the first to be seen there since the ponds were drained in 1940.

Because of the known difficulties (*cf.* *L.B.R.*, No. 12, p. 36, and No. 13, p. 35) observers were not required to record evidence of breeding in the 1949 census. Nevertheless, 87 pairs were reported with nests or young compared with 57 pairs in 1948 and this increase must be considered significant.

My thanks are due to the following who took part in the census—counting Grebes is not in itself a very interesting task, but it is becoming increasingly obvious that the results, if members co-operate for the remaining years, are likely to prove of great interest and of very great value in the study of population changes:—G. L. L. Ackers, Miss C. M. Acland, H. E. Andrews, R. S. Ashley, L. Baker, T. L. Bartlett, H. A. Bilby, D. A. E. Cross, R. W. Hale, L. F. Harris, J. M. Harrison, J. N. Hobbs, P. A. D. Hollom, F. J. Holroyde, K. E. Hoy, A. E. Jolley, K. P. Keywood, J. W. Landells, G. C. Low, J. M. McMeeking, F. R. Mann, A. Manning, J. Meiklejohn, W. N. Mitchell, E. W. Pearce, the late D. C. Rattenbury, B. A. Richards, M. G. Ridpath, T. B. Smith, Mrs E. Souter, E. H. Warmington, C. A. White.

W. D. Melluish will be organising the census in 1950 and succeeding years and offers of help in counting Great Crested Grebes anywhere in the London Area should be sent to him at 56 Sunnyfield, Mill Hill, N.W.7.



# Black Redstarts in the London Area 1949

By N. J. P. WADLEY

INTRODUCTION. In the winter of 1948-49 Black Redstarts were seen in the main breeding area in every month. Song was first heard on February 28th, the main arrivals being reported from March 11th to late April. It was a successful year and the breeding population was the largest yet recorded. In the City eleven pairs raised nineteen broods, with a total of seventy-six young known to have fledged. In addition, three unmated males held territories. One pair raised three broods and six pairs two broods each. First broods normally fledged between May 19th and June 4th, and second broods between July 3rd and 28th.

Two new breeding areas were found, at Croydon New Power Station and West Brompton Cemetery, but no record was received from Westminster, while Fetter Lane, which held three families in 1948, failed to provide evidence of breeding.

Whereas in 1948 the majority of breeding males were in first summer plumage, in 1949 seven males were adult, five were immature and one was in semi-adult plumage.

## SUMMARY OF BREEDING RECORDS:

I. *Cripplegate Area*: (a) Bridgewater Square: two broods, the first of three young which left the nest on June 4th; the second, probably three, fledged July 17th (s.d.h., e.h.w., c.a.w., n.j.p.w.)

(b) Jewin Crescent: the first brood of four fledged on May 24th and the second on July 7th. Interference from the unmated male in Aldersgate was frequently seen (s.d.h., e.h.w.).

(c) London Wall, Wood Street: a fine adult cock held an exceptionally large territory of over eleven acres. First brood fledged about May 28th and the second about July 9th (many reports).

(d) London Wall, Moor Lane: two broods, the first of three, the second of six, fledged May 19-20th and about July 3rd (w.i.b., d.v.f., s.d.h., n.j.p.w.).

(e) London Wall, Coleman Street: only one late brood of four fledged July 27-28th. This pair forced pair (d) above to give up a corner of their territory and, when the latter moulted, took over the greater part of it (m.r.j., p.w.e.c., n.j.p.w.).

II. *Ropemaker Street*: two broods, fledged about May 28th and July 11th, totalled ten and were the largest recorded aggregate for a pair (h.p.m., d.v.f., m.r.j., n.j.p.w.).

III. *Cannon Street*: (a) *Friday Street*: one brood of five fledged May 30th, the adult cock disappearing about June 9-10th. The hen then apparently mated with an immature male to produce III (b) below (E.H.W., H.C.H.).

(b) *Cannon Street, Watling Street*: brood of not less than three fledged *c.* July 14th (E.H.W., L.J.J., N.J.P.W.).

IV. *Walbrook*: an immature cock was first seen on May 25th, but it was not until the first week in July that five juveniles were seen being fed out of the nest (E.H.M.).

V. *Paternoster Row*: this pair, with an immature cock, raised three broods, the first fledgling *c.* May 5th (an exceptionally early date), the second June 17th and the third July 31st, a late date (F.J.H., N.J.P.W.).

VI. *Billiter Square*: the adult cock of this pair had a white fore-crown. First brood of four fledged about May 27th and the second of five on July 10-11th. This territory was long and narrow, extending from *Leadenhall Street* to *Mark Lane*. Though nine young were fledged only one survived more than a fortnight (W.A.L.F., W.E.N., N.J.P.W.).

VII. *Croydon New Power Station*: on August 13th an adult male, a female, a juvenile *c.* 10 days fledged and a fourth bird (? immature male) were seen. Subsequent visits confirmed that at least one, possibly two, young were reared. It is unlikely that the power station could have been sufficiently advanced in 1948 to provide a breeding site in that year (C.B.A.).

VIII. *West Brompton Cemetery, Earl's Court*: a pair was present throughout June, a juvenile being seen on June 7th—breeding probable though not proved (M.C.).

#### NON-BREEDING RECORDS:

Inner London: it was possible to identify most records from the City with breeding birds, but there were two or three unrelatable occurrences. In addition, the following three males held territories throughout most of the season, though no proof of mating or breeding was obtained:—

*Fetter Lane*: an adult, May 1st to October 17th (F.J.H., E.H.W.).

*Gresham Street*: a dark grey bird, April 30th to August 7th.

*Aldersgate*: an adult, May 24th to October 19th (S.D.H., E.H.W.).

Singing males were recorded from S. Kensington, May 16th-June 8th (D.F.O., R.W.H.N., G.C.L.): *Broadcasting House*, June 2-18th (H.C.H., L.K., P.M-B., J.K.H.): *Guy's Hospital*, May 11th (B.S.M.): *Old Broad Street*, May 20th (E.R.B.).

Outer London: *Surrey*: Epsom Sewage Farm, January 17th, one (L.I.C.); Barnes, June 28th, an immature male (R.N.); Woodmansterne, a male on smallholdings on April 15th (P.E.B., M.G.S.).

*Middlesex*: Northwick Park, May 15th, a female or immature male (D.D.B.); Staines, K. G. VI Reservoir, December 4th (H.P.M.), a female or immature male (H.P.M.).

*Kent*: Greenwich Marshes, May 1st to June 1st, a male (J.F.B.).

I would like to thank particularly Mr S. D. Herington, who not only showed me round the City breeding area, but who provided frequent verbal reports and advice. I have also to thank Mr F. J. Holroyde and Mr P. W. E. Currie for valuable notes and assistance. In addition to those whose initials appear after the records given above, thanks are due to the many other observers who have sent in notes, which have been entered on the cards.

## A Repeat Bird Census of Kensington Gardens

By S. CRAMP and W. G. TEAGLE.

### 1. INTRODUCTION.

In the winter of 1925/6 a bird census of Kensington Gardens was carried out by E. M. and B. D. Nicholson (9). They made two full counts, each spread over two days, on November 2 and 4 and December 3 and 5, 1925, and two counts of a part of the Gardens on January 3 and March 5, 1926. In order to ascertain any changes that might have taken place in the winter bird population during the intervening twenty-three years a repeat census was undertaken in 1948/9, consisting of three full counts on December 19, 1948, and January 23 and March 13, 1949. Every effort was made to duplicate the methods of counting as far as possible. The Gardens have few large enclosures, and in the winter months when the trees are bare and there are not so many visitors it is possible to achieve a high degree of completeness. The main danger is that the daily movements of birds for feeding or roosting may lead to omissions or duplications, but in both series of counts these movements were studied beforehand to minimise this risk. Whereas the counts in 1948/9 were each completed in a single day the two full counts in 1925 were spread over two days but this was not considered by E. M. Nicholson to have introduced any appreciable error. Two of the earlier counts were affected by unusual weather. The count on December 3 and 5, 1925, took place after a spell of severe cold when the Round Pond was completely frozen, so that the ducks were almost absent, and the partial count on January 3, 1926, was preceded by exceptionally rainy weather which kept visitors from the Gardens, so it was believed, leading to a reduction in the number of house-sparrows. The winter of 1948/9 was not extreme in any way and it is not thought that the counts were seriously influenced by unusual weather conditions.

## 2. RESULTS.

The results for the various counts are shown in Table I. The figures in brackets after certain species show the results obtained by the Nicholsons on their partial counts on January 3 and March 5, 1926. As both the Round Pond and the Long Water were included on these counts the figures for the ducks and gulls are actual totals, but those for the house-sparrow are estimates of the total population.

TABLE I.

Species.	1925.		1948.	1949.	
	Nov. 2-4.	Dec. 3-5.	Dec. 19.	Jan. 23.	Mar. 13.
(3) Carrion-Crow	5	4	2	2	2
(5) Jackdaw	2	8	2	4	1
(11) Jay	—	—	11	12	8
(14) Starling	411	343	22	39	53
(19) Greenfinch	2	1	—	—	—
(41) Chaffinch	10	9	7	8	10
(42) Brambling	—	1	—	—	—
(61) House-Sparrow	2603	2595 (1840, 2505)	885	807	836
(70) Sky-Lark	11	—	—	—	—
(90) Pied Wagtail	1	2	—	2	—
(93) Tree-Creeper	—	—	1	—	2
(98) Great Tit	19	18	22	18	17
(100) Blue Tit	37	17	16	25	18
(102) Coal-Tit	3	—	3	3	2
(174) Mistle-Thrush	3	1	12	12	11
(175) Song-Thrush	4	10	—	4	11
(178) Redwing	—	15	—	—	—
(184) Blackbird	21	15	99	85	88
(208) Robin	16	12	7	15	10
(211) Hedge-Sparrow	6	7	8	4	11
(213) Wren	6	4	—	—	—
(237) Gt. Spotted Woodpecker	1	1	—	—	2
(253) Tawny Owl	—	—	1	—	—
(263) Kestrel	1	—	—	—	—
(317) Mallard	240	9 (195, 174)	81	69	132
(318) Gadwall	1	— (—, —)	—	—	—
(328) Common Pochard	16	— (18, 41)	18	22	15
(330) Tufted Duck	7	— (5, 46)	77	130	74
(380) Wood-Pigeon	241	226	5	43	53
(381) Stock-Dove	—	7	—	5	13
(478) Black-headed Gull	289	440 (277, 246)	618	550	422
(481) Common Gull	—	14 (15, 11)	40	35	36
(482) Herring-Gull	—	—	1	—	1
(485) Lr. Black-backed Gull	—	—	1	—	—
(510) Moorhen	26	20	10	10	19
(511) Coot	—	—	—	2	4
Totals	3982	3779	1949	1906	1851
No. of species	26	24	24	24	26

(The Mute Swan was not included in any of the counts. The "London" Pigeon was counted in 1948-9, the totals being 66, 68 and 65 respectively for the three counts.)

The numbers in brackets before the name of each species refer to Witherby's "Check-List of British Birds" (1941), where the scientific names will be found.

### 3. CHANGES IN THE BIRD POPULATION.

Excluding two species which were found only on the count in December 1925 after the spell of hard weather (brambling and redwing) and five others which are occasional visitors (skylark, kestrel, gadwall, British lesser black-backed gull and herring gull) the changes in the bird population in the twenty-three years between the two series of counts may be summarised as follows:—

(a) Definite increase—Jay, mistle-thrush, blackbird, tufted duck, black-headed gull and common gull. Six species.

(b) Possible slight increase—Tree-creeper, coot. Two species.

(c) Little apparent change—Jackdaw, chaffinch, pied wagtail, great tit, blue tit, coal-tit, song-thrush, hedge-sparrow, great spotted woodpecker, tawny owl, pochard and stock-dove. Twelve species.

(d) Possible slight decrease—Carrion-crow, greenfinch, and robin. Three species.

(e) Definite decrease—Starling, house-sparrow, wren, mallard, wood-pigeon and moorhen. Six species.

These changes might be due to one or more of the following factors:—

1. Changes in the local habitat. Known changes are the reduction in the tranquillity of the Gardens due to the removal of the railings and other wartime alterations, the emptying of the fountain basins, vegetational changes in the Long Water sanctuary, the disturbances caused by mechanical boats on the Round Pond and model aircraft on Buck Hill, and the introduction of allotments in various parts. An important change in the vertebrate population is the disappearance of the grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*). Twenty-one were counted in November, 1926 (E. M. Nicholson, *in litt.*). The campaign for their destruction began in 1930, and in 1938 only one was reported from the Gardens (5). It is probable that during the war years there was some reduction in the number of cats frequenting the Gardens.

2. Changes in the surrounding habitat. The most obvious is the continued growth of London, so that open feeding land is pushed steadily further away. This was probably the main cause of the disappearance of the rook from central London, but it does not appear to have greatly affected any other species since.

3. The changed reaction of a species to urban conditions such as enabled the wood-pigeon, black-headed gull and moorhen to establish themselves in inner London at the end of the last century, and the tufted duck more recently.

4. General increase or decrease in a species.

Bearing these factors in mind the position of the twelve species showing a definite increase or decrease may be examined:—

#### A. Increased.

*Jay.* At the time of the Nicholsons' census the jay was only an occasional visitor to central London, except for Holland Park and neighbourhood where they were seen in the autumn of 1923 and onwards (4).

Since then it has slowly spread throughout the central parks, and now occurs in all of them. It was first reported as possibly breeding in Kensington Gardens in 1941 (7) and has bred or attempted to breed there each year since. Although Alexander and Lack (1) report local increases in southern England since 1914 the increase in inner London appears to be essentially a case of a species adapting itself to urban conditions, in this instance primarily by displaying a much greater tolerance to the close presence of human beings.

*Mistle-Thrush.* Writing in 1898, W. H. Hudson (6) described this species as having disappeared from Kensington Gardens, but in 1909 Dixon (2) stated that it was said to breed there although he had no proof of this. He added that it was very wild, only entering the inner circle of London in the winter. Since then it has definitely increased in inner London, and now occurs, and usually breeds, in all the parks, and has occasionally bred in some of the larger squares.

*Blackbird.* This species is common in all the central parks, and in fact occurs in inner London wherever there are gardens or squares of any size. Without census work of this kind a change of numbers in such a common species can be easily overlooked, but these results suggest that the increase has been considerable. Alexander and Lack (1) state that the species is increasing generally, the main cause being unknown. The increase of both the blackbird and the mistle-thrush in the Gardens may have been helped by the disappearance of the grey squirrel and the smaller numbers of cats during the war years, but against these must be set the increase in jays.

*Tufted Duck.* Frequent counts of this species in 1947/9 showed some irregular fluctuations in numbers, though they were never so marked as in the case of the mallard. As the numbers on the three effective counts in 1925/6 were all much less than those in 1948/9 some increase has probably occurred. This species has increased generally throughout the country (1).

*Black-headed Gull and Common Gull.* The regular counts in 1947/9 showed no marked daily fluctuations in this species, so these census results probably reflect a genuine increase. The black-headed gull, like the tufted duck, feeds regularly on bread supplied by visitors, but the common gull obtains most of its food by piracy on the smaller gull. Both gulls have increased generally (1).

#### *B. Decreased.*

*Starling.* This enormous decline is difficult to explain, as there is no evidence to suggest any general decline in the London starling population. It was at first thought that the 1925/6 figures might have been swollen by the birds gathering there before moving off to roost, but Mr. E. M. Nicholson (*in litt.*) confirmed that this was not the case. He stated further that he had reason to believe that a similar decline had occurred in other parks, for example in Battersea Park. The removal of railings and the disturbance caused by model aeroplanes at the favourite feeding grounds on Buck Hill might have had some effect,

but hardly sufficient to account for this great decrease. Another possibility is that the numbers have fallen because the rationing of bread (between July 1946 and July 1948) reduced the amount of food brought by visitors; but although they do feed on bread they spend most of their time feeding on the grass, either in the open parts or beneath the trees, so this is likely to be only a partial explanation.

*House-Sparrow.* Again a striking reduction, the numbers in 1948/9 being only about a third of those in 1925/6. A decrease in the number of sparrows in towns during this century has been noted by many observers, but this is the first time that the extent of the decline has been measured in this country. The most usual explanation is that it is largely due to a lessened food supply following the almost complete replacement of horse traffic by motors. Southern (10) stated that a marked decrease had occurred in parts of the United States in the last thirty or forty years as well as a decrease in Canada and France, especially in towns. He quoted Eaton (3) who pointed out that although the disappearance of the horse might be an important factor in towns, a fall in numbers had been reported from other localities in the United States, such as poultry farms, where this factor would be of little importance. Similarly, the sparrows in Kensington Gardens would be only slightly affected by this, as they are largely dependent on bread supplied by visitors. They might have been affected by bread rationing, for though rationing ended some five months before the first of the 1948/9 counts the sparrow population would take some time to revert to its former level if lessened supplies of bread during the two years of rationing had caused a reduction. It is by no means certain however that rationing affected the amount of bread brought by visitors sufficiently to account for the whole of this considerable decline, and in view of the increase of the tufted duck, black-headed gull and common gull, all largely dependent on bread, it seems unlikely that it can have been a major factor. It remains a distinct possibility that the house-sparrow is suffering a general decline in numbers in various parts of its range, due to causes at present unknown.

*Wren.* A small but definite decline. Odd birds are noticed throughout the winter months, and a pair or two may breed. The cutting of cover and the disturbance caused by the removal of railings are probably largely responsible for this decrease.

*Mallard.* The numbers of this species fluctuate considerably, but as the figures in 1925/6 on the three occasions when the water was not frozen are all in excess of any obtained by us on many counts in 1947/9 some decline seems to have taken place. There is no evidence of any widespread change in the country generally (Miss Phyllis Barclay-Smith (*in litt.*) and (1). It may be that the mallard has to some extent been adversely affected by the increase in the numbers of gulls; the tufted duck, which can take evasive action by diving, has increased.

*Wood-Pigeon.* Again one of the most numerous species in 1925/6 showed a large decrease. Extensive shooting during the war years fol-

lowing complaints by allotment-holders is almost certainly responsible. By 1948/9 some recovery had already occurred, for Low (8) noted in 1945 that "in Kensington Gardens they used to abound but are now rare".

*Moorhen.* Although the numbers of this species fluctuate a little some decline has probably occurred, especially as the higher figures obtained on the count on March 13, 1948, probably included some birds which had left St. James's Park following the draining of the lake there. Alexander and Lack (1) considered that it is probably increasing in the country generally, and we have no explanation for the decrease in the Gardens.

In the case of the five species shown as having possibly increased or decreased slightly the variations are so small that it would be unwise to draw definite conclusions without further evidence.

The total population in 1948/9 was considerably less than in 1925/6, with an average density of 71.1, 69.5 and 67.5 birds per ten acres respectively compared with 144.7 and 137.4, a reduction of about fifty per cent. Much of this was due to the fall in the numbers of the house-sparrow, and it is noticeable that little of the gap left has been filled by other species. The total number of species seen on each count, however, was remarkably constant throughout.

#### 4. HABITAT PREFERENCES.

The distribution of birds, both in numbers and species, varied greatly in different sections of the Gardens. On all the 1948/9 counts a record was kept of the different habitats in which the birds were found. For this purpose the following main habitats were distinguished:—

- (1) Shrubberies and flower-beds, with adjoining paths.
- (2) Lawns, with some trees and shrubs.
- (3) Allotments.
- (4) Open grassland, with scattered trees.
- (5) Sheepfold, long coarse grass with trees, used for sheep in summer.
- (6) The Sanctuary, woodland, with some undergrowth, adjoining water.
- (7) Woodland, open to the public, with grass but no undergrowth.
- (8) Round Pond and Long Water.
- (9) Lawns, with some trees and shrubs, adjoining water.

The total number for the three counts for each species found in the varying habitats is shown in Table II.

The greatest density of birds was found in the shrubberies and flower-beds with 609 birds per ten acres, followed by water, with 458, lawns adjoining water with 398 and lawns with 293. It was easily the lowest in the woodland, open to the public and without undergrowth, with only 5 birds per ten acres, followed by the open grassland with scattered trees, with 28. Yet this same woodland provided the greatest variety of species, with no less than 18, again followed by the open grassland with 14, as compared with only 12 in the far more densely



populated shrubberies and flower-beds. The smallest number of species was found on the allotments and lawns, each with only 7.

TABLE II.

Species.	Habitats.									Tls.
	1.	2.	3	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	
Carrion-Crow	—	—	—	5	—	—	1	—	—	6
Jackdaw	—	—	—	2	—	—	5	—	—	7
Jay	12	1	—	1	4	—	13	—	—	31
Starling	10	—	4	53	2	—	45	—	—	114
Chaffinch	9	—	—	5	1	6	4	—	—	25
House-Sparrow	2064	91	122	31	1	17	160	—	42	2528
Pied Wagtail	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	2
Tree-Creeper	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	3
Great Tit	19	—	1	8	16	8	4	—	1	57
Blue Tit	19	1	—	3	5	10	19	—	2	59
Coal-Tit	2	—	—	—	5	—	1	—	—	8
Mistle-Thrush	—	—	—	18	2	—	8	—	7	35
Song-Thrush	10	—	—	1	1	1	—	—	2	15
Blackbird	159	30	13	13	17	6	17	—	17	272
Robin	25	1	2	—	—	2	1	—	1	32
Hedge-Sparrow	18	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	2	23
Gt. Spotted Woodpecker	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	2
Tawny Owl	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Mallard	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	221	61	282
Tufted Duck	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	281	—	281
Pochard	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	55	—	55
Wood-Pigeon	27	6	1	6	1	3	49	—	8	101
Stock-Dove	—	—	—	4	—	—	14	—	—	18
Black-headed Gull	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1590	—	1590
Common Gull	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	111	—	111
Lr. Black-backed Gull	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Herring Gull	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	2
Moorhen	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	7	31	39
Coot	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	5	6
Totals for three counts	2374	132	144	151	55	54	348	2269	179	5706
Area in acres (approx.)	13	1½	8½	18½	1	2	212	16½	1½	274
Density per 10 acres (average per count)	609	293	58	28	183	90	5	458	398	69.4
No. of species	12	7	7	14	11	9	18	9	12	29

Three species—house-sparrow, wood-pigeon and blackbird—occurred in all eight land habitats, whilst the great tit and blue tit were found in seven, the robin in six, and the jay, starling, chaffinch and song-thrush in five. In spite of the overwhelming numerical preponderance of the house-sparrow amongst the land birds, with an average for each count of 842.6 against 90.6 for the next highest, the blackbird, there were three land habitats in which it was not the most numerous species. These were the open grassland, where the starling preponderated; the sheepfold, where the great tit and blue tit were numerically dominant and four other species were more numerous than the house-sparrow, and the lawns adjoining water, where the mallard took precedence. In fact, over 80% of the house-sparrows were found in one habitat, the shrubberies and flower-beds, occupying only thirteen acres out of a total of 274.

## CONCLUSIONS.

1. A repeat census of Kensington Gardens was made in the winter of 1948/9 in order to ascertain the changes which had taken place in the bird population since the original census made by E. M. and B. D. Nicholson in 1925/6.

2. Six species (jay, mistle-thrush, blackbird, tufted duck, and black-headed gull and common gull) had increased, whilst six species (starling, house-sparrow, wren, mallard, wood-pigeon and moorhen) had declined in numbers. The remaining seventeen species showed little or no apparent change.

3. The total population in 1948/9 was only about half that in 1925/6, much of this being due to the great fall in the numbers of house-sparrows. The number of species remained remarkably constant.

4. An analysis is made of the distribution of the population among the various habitats of the Gardens in 1948/9.

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# The Census of Swifts, Swallows and House-Martins, 1949

By S. CRAMP.

## 1. INTRODUCTION.

These three species, the swift, swallow and house-martin, are all now largely dependent on man for their nesting sites and all feed on insects caught in flight. Breeding censuses of the swallow have been made in a number of areas and some work has been done on the house-martin, but there has not, so far as is known, been any similar study of the swift. It was considered that a joint census of all three species in differing areas in London would be of considerable ecological interest. For this purpose four sample areas were chosen, based on the grid-squares of the 1" O.S. map, and broadly representative, as far as possible, of four main types of habitat—the inner zone, the middle suburbs, the outer suburbs and the outskirts. These areas are shown in Figures 1-4.

## 2. METHOD.

The nests of the swallow and house-martin are usually visible and can be located without particular difficulty. The swift presents a harder problem. It nests in holes, usually under the eaves of houses, so that the actual nests cannot be seen from the ground. The birds visit the holes infrequently, for there is often little or no building, and when the young have hatched the parents feed them only once every three hours or so in good weather and less frequently in bad. They do, however, often visit their nesting sites in the daytime soon after their arrival here and, further, shortly before retiring to roost they usually fly around screaming and frequently go in and out of the holes. The fact that they often nest in colonies also helps in finding the nests. Nevertheless, frequent visits and great care are needed to ensure completeness, and the area to be covered by each observer must be small. Except in the inner zone, where birds were few, and the outskirts, where the built-up areas are limited, observers were not asked to cover more than two grid-squares, and usually less. Probably one grid-square (about 0.39 square miles) per observer is the ideal in built-up areas.

The observers found, in practice, that there were other guides to the presence of nests besides those already mentioned. Swifts are restricted to buildings which provide suitable holes, and one observer reported that with experience it became possible to tell merely by looking down a road or street whether it offered suitable breeding sites. Another found that at the beginning of the breeding season birds could often be heard calling in their nests during the daytime, and even, on two occasions, at 11 p.m. A third was able to locate some sites by the presence of droppings. Finally, many observers noted that although at times the swift will range some distance from the nest for feeding it tends to feed and fly much of the time around the nesting site, so that

if birds were found repeatedly round a group of buildings this usually gave an indication of the presence of nests. Gilbert White (5) noted that in Sweden the swift was called the *ring swala* "from the perpetual rings or circles that it takes around the scene of its nidification".

In all, 163 nests were found, with a further 58 probable nests, giving a total of 221. With adequate care and time, then, nests can be located, but how accurate are the results obtained? There are two possible sources of error. As the actual nests cannot normally be inspected their presence must be deduced from the behaviour of the birds. A swift seen entering a suitable hole does not necessarily mean that a nest is there; if early in the season the bird may be only prospecting, if later, and in the evening, the hole may be a roosting hole, used by an unmated bird or by one whose mate is sitting elsewhere. Observers were asked to pay several visits to a site, and to study the behaviour of the birds to ensure that such cases were not included. The second and opposite danger is that some nests may be missed completely. This problem arises with most breeding censuses, and though it may be impossible to assess accurately the degree of completeness obtained an estimate can be made by taking into account the habits of the species concerned, and the skill and available time of the observers. Over most of the sample areas the observers were satisfied that as a result of intensive watching they had located all or nearly all of the nests. In some cases, owing to inaccessibility of the sites or lack of time, the observers were unable to locate the actual nesting holes, although the regular presence of birds around suitable buildings was a good indication that nests existed. Such cases were counted as probable nests, based on the number of pairs regularly seen. The number of such probable nests was slightly more than a quarter of the total.

As a rough check on the completeness of the results, observers were asked to make counts of all swifts seen in their area between 8 and 9 p.m. on three dates—at the beginning of the breeding season, during the incubation period and when the young were being fed. The value of this check largely depends on how far the swift ranges from the nest for feeding. Except in the inner zone, it appears that they tend to feed much of the time either close to their nests or at special feeding places (over trees, water, open spaces, etc.) within half a mile or so of the nest. If this proves to be correct, a count over a large area should give a rough check on population. Unfortunately, not all observers were able to make counts on all three dates, but the results for two areas were:—

	Hounslow. c. 6.2 sq. mls.	Barnes and Mortlake. c. 2.0 sq. mls.
May 23	95	34
June 13	128	54
July 4	148	109

Nests: 51 + 20 probable = 142 birds; 47 + 3 probable = 100 birds.

The July 4 results, when both parents should be searching for food, agree fairly well, but those for the other dates are less satisfactory. Further counts of this type are necessary before the value of this check can be decided.

Taking all the factors into account it may be said that although isolated nests have probably been missed it is unlikely that any large colonies have been overlooked, and as will be seen the majority of nests are in large colonies.

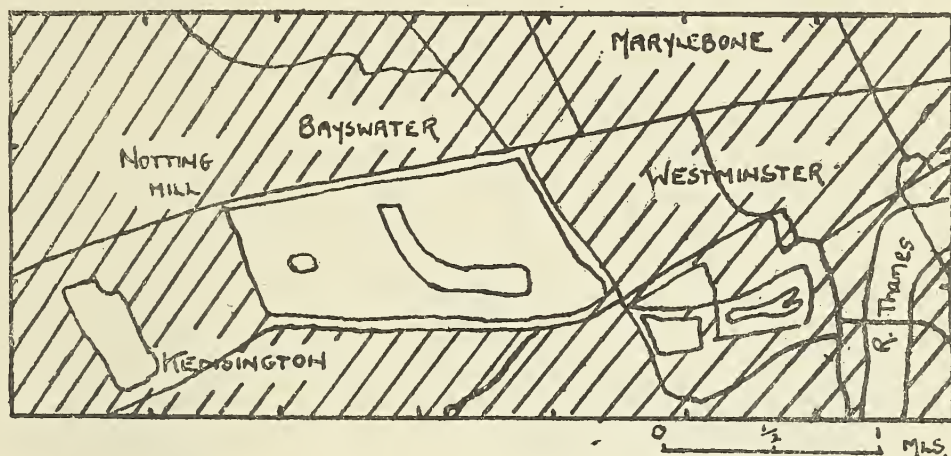


Figure 1. Area A—Inner Zone (21 grid squares).

### 3. RESULTS.

*Inner Zone.* (Figure 1). This zone is mostly built-up, but it includes four of the Royal Parks and Holland Park, and is close to Regent's Park. There are a large number of squares and, in such districts as Kensington and Bayswater, many houses with large gardens. No nests were found. The swallow and house-martin occurred only on migration, but swifts were seen feeding regularly in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens in numbers up to 30 during the breeding season (very few birds were seen in St. James's Park this year), and these birds always flew away to the north. The nearest nests recorded were two pairs in Kilburn High Rd., but it is probable that some pairs bred in the St. John's Wood area. The only other birds seen regularly were on the extreme west of the area near Olympia, where up to 22 were seen. They flew away westwards and may have come from the Hammersmith colonies or from outside the sample areas.

*Inner Suburbs.* (Figure 2.)\* Because of illness, some of the sample area (Chiswick and Fulham) was not covered. The remainder, except for the large stretch of river, the reservoirs and Barnes Common, is built-up. Just to the south are the large open areas of Richmond Park and Wimbledon Common. This area (about 3.8 square miles) has the greatest breeding density of both swifts and house-martins. In the case of the swift, there were 59 nests and 38 probable, concentrated in four main groups at East Sheen and Mortlake, Putney, Barnes and Hammersmith, whilst the East Sheen group had a further 10 nests and the Putney group a further 20 nests just outside the boundaries of the sample area. At Hammersmith more birds were seen feeding near the

\*Owing to the small scale of Figs. 2/4, the position of nests is indicated only approximately.

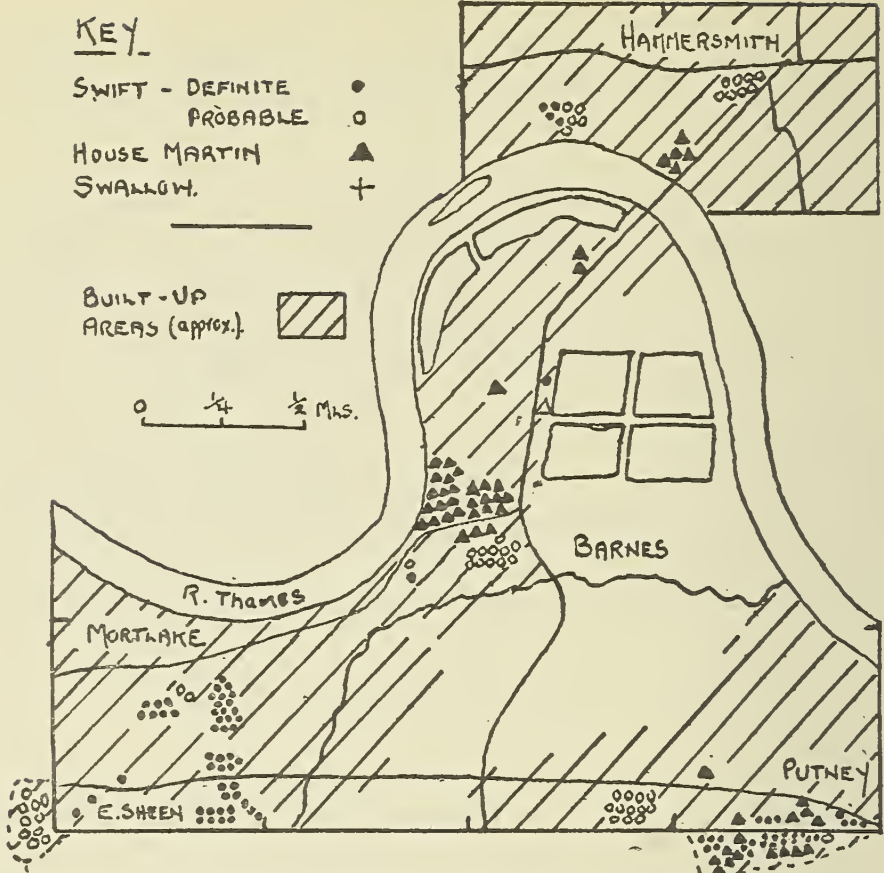


Figure 2. Area B—Inner Suburbs (16 grid squares).

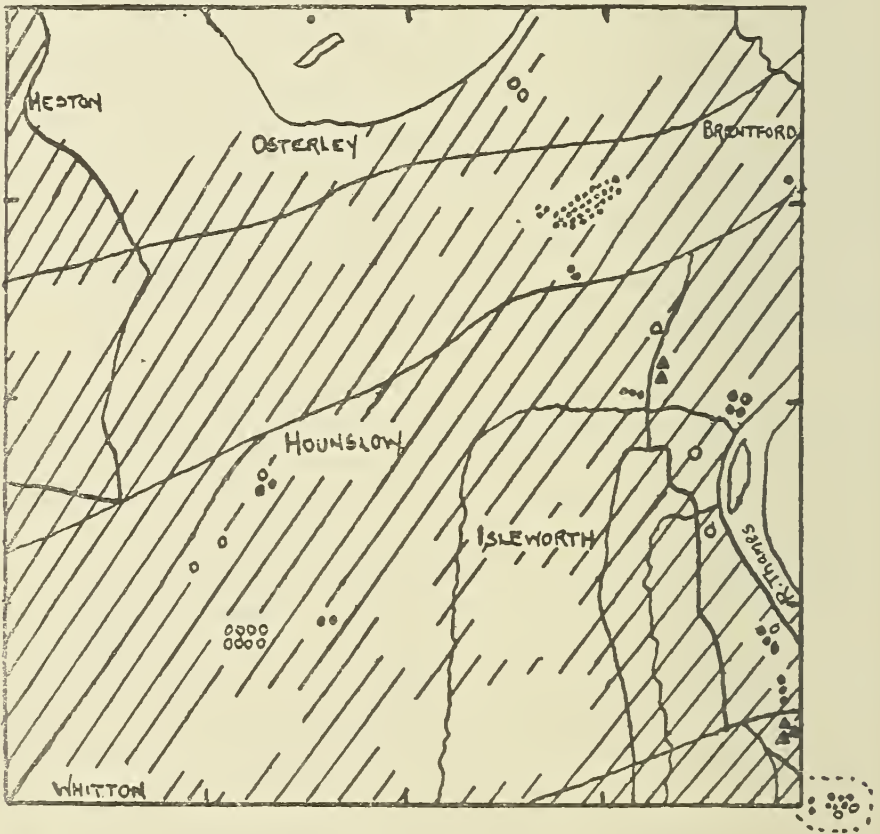


Figure 3. Area C—Outer Suburbs (16 grid squares).

river than could be accounted for by the nests found, but some of these were seen to fly north outside the area and probably bred there. Forty-five nests of the house-martin were located, all except four scattered ones in Barnes being found in three main groups. Two of these groups, Barnes (30 nests) and Hammersmith (5 nests) adjoined swift colonies, whilst the Putney group (6 nests, with a further 9 just outside the area) was almost intermingled with the swift colony. No nests of the swallow were found, and the birds were seen only on migration.

*Outer Suburbs.* (Figure 3). Most of the houses were built during the inter-war years and have medium-sized gardens. There are a few playing fields and open spaces, but except for a stretch of the Thames and two small streams in the south-east there is little water in the area. Fifty-one nests of the swift were found, with 20 probable. The nests were rather more spread out, but even so the great majority fall into three main groups—Northumberland Avenue 36, Hounslow 16, and 8 near the river in the south-east corner (plus 10 more just outside the area). Only five nests of the house-martin were found, all close to the river. A pair of swallows was seen regularly near The Green School but an intensive search failed to locate the nest, which may have been outside the area.

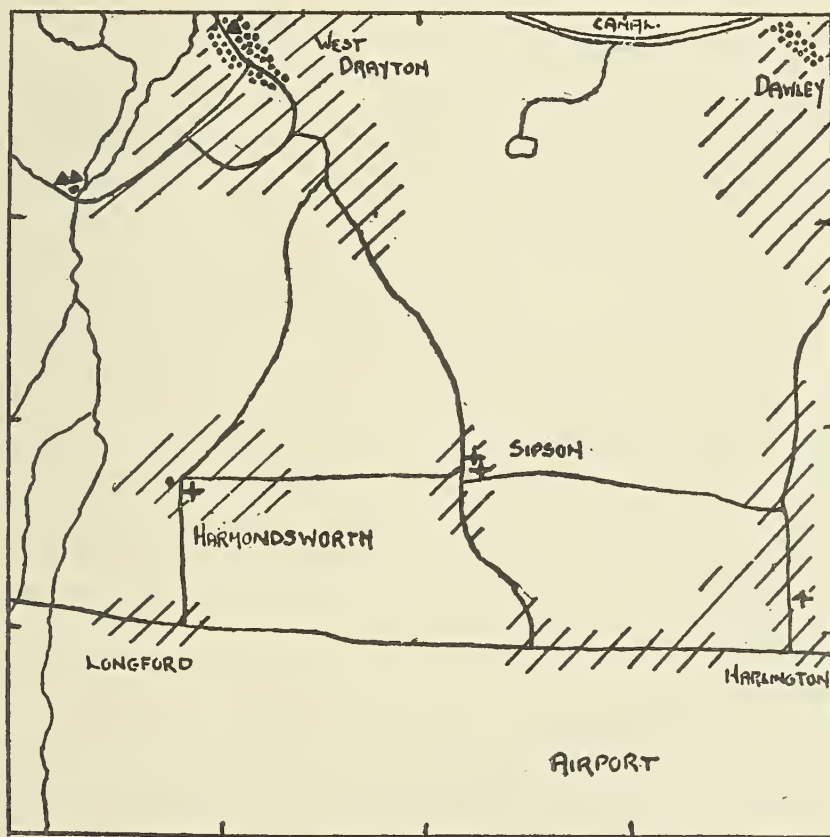


Figure 4. Area D—Outskirts (16 grid squares).

*Outskirts.* (Figure 4). The main part of this area is under intensive cultivation but there are several small villages as well as half of a small town. In the south is a major portion of London Airport. The western edge is watered by the Colne, and there is a stretch of canal

in the north. Fifty-three nests of the swift were found, all except two being in the two large colonies in the north of the area at West Drayton and Dawley. All the nests were close to water. There were only three house-martins' nests, all near the Colne. There were four pairs of swallows breeding, all on farms in the belt of cultivated land towards the south. It has been suggested that in 1949 the numbers of both swallows and house-martins were less than usual, and it is interesting to note that in 1948 in this same area 15 house-martins' nests were found and 11 swallows'.

The densities of nests per 1000 acres within the sample areas were:—

	Swift.		House-Martin.		Swallow.
	Excluding probable nests.	Including probable nests.			
A. Inner Zone	—	—	—	—	
B. Inner Suburbs	24.1	39.6	18.4	—	
C. Outer Suburbs	12.9	17.9	1.2	—	
D. Outskirts	13.4	13.4	0.7	1.0	
Total	10.4	14.2	3.4	0.2	24½ sq. mls.
Areas B, C and D only	15.6	21.3	5.1	0.3	16½ sq. mls.

The swift is the most abundant of the three species in all areas, being between three and four times as numerous as the house-martin. The numbers of both diminish steadily as we move out from the inner suburbs. Both species are highly concentrated. Thus in the case of the swift, out of 61 grid-squares three have densities of over 100 pairs per 1000 acres, whilst twenty-eight have less than 10 pairs per 1000 acres. With the house-martin there are only five grid-squares with densities above 10 pairs per 1000 acres, the highest being 68 per 1000 acres.

There are no comparable figures for the swift, and most of the swallow census work has been done in more rural areas. At Oxford, Alexander (1) found that there were about 42 pairs of house-martins per 1000 acres in the urban areas, and from 14/16 pairs in the rural areas. Cramp and Ward (3) carried out a census of both swallows and house-martins in the Manchester district, including areas similar to areas B, C and D, above. They found about 9 pairs of house-martins per 1000 acres and 3½-5 pairs of swallows, so that in both species the density was higher than in London.

#### 4 DISTRIBUTION FACTORS.

It is interesting to attempt to assess the factors governing distribution from this first census of the three species in the same areas, though much more similar work will be needed before any firm conclusions can be drawn. There are clearly two essential factors: food and nesting sites. All three species feed on insects taken in flight. They can and do feed at varying heights, but the swift tends to feed higher than the house-martin which in turn tends to feed higher than the swallow. This may mean that their food is significantly different, and in the case of the swift support is perhaps lent to this view by its early departure,



hinting at the disappearance of some insects which form a necessary part of its food supply. This can be proved only when percentage analyses of the food of the three species, covering the whole period of their stay here, have been made and more work is available on the height distribution of insects.

The three species have definite and differing requirements for their nests. The swift nests in holes, usually under the eaves of houses, and gathers what few materials it needs in the air. The swallow nests on a ledge, normally on a rafter inside such buildings as sheds, or outhouses, using mud as its main material. The house-martin generally builds on the outside walls of houses under eaves, and requires a considerable amount of mud for its nest. These special requirements impose definite limits on distribution. Suitable holes for the swift are not found in every house. They might occur more frequently in older houses, for cracks tend to develop with age and the type of construction with large eaves and a gap between the wall and the roof was formerly more common. In many cases an estimate was made of the age of the house in which the nests were built:—

Age of House	Area		
	B	C	D
Pre-1914	76	11	53
1919-39	—	33	—
Post-1945	—	—	—

The figures for areas B and C are inconclusive, because in the former case most of the houses were built prior to 1914, and in the latter the majority between 1919 and 1939. In D area a fair proportion of the houses were built after 1919, yet all the nests were in ones constructed earlier, which lends some support to this possibility.

Of the 112 nests for which information is available, 67 were found in semi-detached houses, 9 in detached, 31 in terraced houses, 3 in churches, 1 in a farm and 1 in an old mill. One observer noted that the nests in his area were almost all in the larger and taller houses, and that the birds seemed to prefer the separation of detached or semi-detached houses. Gilbert White (5) also noted that they "haunted tall buildings, churches and steeples" usually breeding in such places, but he added that half of his Selborne colony bred in some of the "lowest and meanest thatched cottages". Nests as low as twelve feet were found in Hounslow, and the large colony at Dawley was in terraced cottages, so the swift is not confined to tall or separate buildings, though it may prefer them. Most of the house-martin nests were in the apex of front gables of semi-detached houses, and an observer noted a tendency for them to select cream or white houses, missing dark coloured ones in the same streets. Elsewhere they breed successfully under sloping or right-angled eaves, and the chief nesting requirement for this species seems most likely to be ample supplies of mud. The swallow, needing access to beams or rafters inside a building as well as mud to build, probably has a more restricted choice of sites than either of the other species.

These are the two main factors. There are other possible factors, for example specific habitat requirements for song or courtship, and

tolerance of the presence of human beings. None of the three species appears to be limited by song-posts, their courtship seems to be mostly aerial and all show considerable indifference to man.

All three species are absent from the inner zone, and here insufficient food seems likely to be the chief reason. Built-up areas are unlikely to produce large numbers of flying insects, and atmospheric pollution may cause a further reduction. Except on migration all the feeding swifts seen in this zone were in the parks, hunting over water or trees near to water. But why do the swifts feeding in these parks not nest nearer to them? It may be that the majority of the buildings, being of the flat-roofed type, do not provide suitable holes, though there is no lack of churches with towers and steeples. More probably the parks can supply only a part of their food requirements, and this suggestion is supported by the absence of swifts from the built-up core of other cities, such as Manchester, where there are nesting sites.

The swift population is most dense in the inner suburban area (B). In some ways this area is not typical of the inner suburbs, for it contains much water (the big curve of the Thames, and the many reservoirs, often with trees near) and open country both to the north (Chiswick, with park and playing fields) and to the south (Richmond Park and Wimbledon Common). The outer suburban area (C) has fewer open spaces and much less water. The nests are not restricted to areas near to water, though the density is greater in such areas. Thus in the parts of areas B, C and D which were within half-a-mile of water (48.8% of the whole) the density of swifts was 28.0 pairs per 1000 acres, compared with only 14.9 pairs for the remainder. Those parts within three-quarters of a mile of water had a density of 28.8 pairs per 1000 acres, whilst in the remainder the density was as low as 1.4 pairs. The greater density in area B compared with that in C might be attributed to the fact that the older houses in the former provide more nesting sites, but as has been shown the swift has colonised the 1919-39 houses in the latter quite successfully, and it is probable that in all districts there are more possible nesting sites available than are actually used. The greater area of water in B appears to be the most important factor. In the outskirts (area D) the swift is almost restricted to the built-up parts near to water. The swift is an urban bird mainly because it now needs buildings to provide nesting sites, but where these are present food seems to be the main factor affecting density, and areas with water tend to provide more food.

When Alexander made the first census of house-martins (1) he pointed out that the presence of water appeared to be a favourable factor. House-martin colonies may be found on occasion well away from water but their density tends to be greater near to it. In the present census they showed this tendency even more clearly than the swift, for no less than 96.2% of the nests were within half-a-mile of water. The presence of water usually means that there is both insect food and the mud for nests. Suitable mud may be obtained, however, more easily from small ponds, puddles in unpaved roads, or even (as at Putney), from roof gutters in rainy weather, than from rivers or reservoirs. Also, as

Alexander pointed out, there was no shortage of mud for the rural birds in the wet summer of 1932, yet the population was three times as dense in the urban Oxford area with its many waterways. The swift, too, shows a similar tendency to nest near water, but it does not need mud for nesting. Once again, it appears that it is the food found over water and over land and trees near water which is important.

Boyd (2) showed that swallows favour rural areas, where suitable buildings, usually farm buildings, are available for nesting. All four nests were on farms, in the only stretch of rural land in the sample areas. The nearest probable nest in these sample areas was at Hounslow (c. 10½ miles from St. Paul's), and the nearest certain nest was 15 miles out at Harlington. Fitter (4) quotes the surprising case of a swallow nesting in Pimlico in 1941, but generally it is clear that the swallow, like the rook, is being pushed steadily further towards the outskirts of London.

#### 5. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

This census could not have been made without the patient work of many observers. I wish to express my gratitude to the following who were responsible for the counts in the sample areas:—Mrs E. Souter, Miss P. Souter; Messrs N. A. G. H. Beal, H. A. Bilby, K. V. Elphinstone, R. W. Hayman, J. W. Meiklejohn, O. L. Miller, T. H. L. Mills, E. G. Pedler, B. A. Richards, Dr. Irvine B. Smith, W. G. Teagle, Dr. A. G. G. Thompson, E. C. Watt; the Borough Road College Natural History Society, and pupils of The Green School, Isleworth, and the Spring Grove Central School, Isleworth.

#### 6. SUMMARY.

1. A breeding census of swifts, swallows and house-martins was made in four sample areas (representing as far as possible the inner zone, the inner and outer suburbs and the outskirts), with a total area of about 24¼ square miles, in London in 1949.

2. In these areas were found 163 definite nests of the swift, with a further 58 probable, 53 house-martins' nests, and 4 definite and 1 possible swallows' nests.

3. None of the three species was found to breed in the inner zone. The density of both swifts and house-martins was greatest in the inner suburbs, gradually decreasing towards the outskirts. Except for a possible nest in the outer suburbs, the swallow was confined to the outskirts.

4. A preliminary analysis is made of the probable factors influencing the distribution of these three species.

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- (5) White, Gilbert. (1789). *The Natural History of Selborne*.

## Bird Ringing Report 1948-49

THE Society's interest in bird ringing extends beyond the London Area, and our annual return to the British Trust for Ornithology contains records of birds which members have ringed anywhere in the British Isles. In the following table, which analyses the efforts of the 31 ringers taking part, the figures are total figures, not figures for the London Area only. The more important recoveries notified in 1949 of birds ringed in the Area are given in the systematic list. Each year since the war the number of birds ringed by the Society has increased, and in the twelve months ending October, 1949, 923 birds were ringed, an increase of 308 over the year before. Of the 62 species marked in 1948-49 the most numerous were Starling (131), Blackbird (102), Blue Tit (61), Black-headed Gull (51), and Chaffinch (48).

<i>Ringer</i>	<i>Nestlings</i>	<i>Trapped</i>	<i>Total</i>
H. E. Andrews	—	2	2
M. J. Ardley	17	3	20
C. B. Ashby	—	2	2
L. Baker	4	16	20
T. L. Bartlett	26	19	45
Mrs R. Brown	9	—	9
C. L. Collenette	—	39	39
S. Cramp	6	—	6
S. H. Davies	16	2	18
E. H. Down	6	1	7
H. J. Evans	6	1	7
R. S. R. Fitter	18	—	18
A. Gibbs	52	33	90
D. Goodwin	108	60	168
Miss N. Goom	6	—	6
R. S. M. Green	17	20	37
P. J. Hayman	5	2	7
R. W. Hayman	22	—	22
E. H. Herbert	9	—	9
R. C. Homes	62	1	63
G. E. Manser	13	—	13
H. Murray	—	2	2
R. G. Newton	38	57	95
E. R. Parrinder	9	14	23
B. A. Richards	6	6	12
P. F. C. Rumsey	47	—	47
W. G. Teagle	26	2	28
A. G. G. Thompson	9	—	9
C. N. Walter	8	51	59
A. C. Wheeler	—	6	6
J. A. Wigzell	4	30	34
Total, 1948-49	549	374	923
Total, 1947-48	326	289	615

The newly-formed Bird Ringing Sub-Committee is composed as follows:—P. A. D. Hollom (Chairman), J. E. Taylor (Secretary), D. Goodwin, G. E. Manser, B. A. Richards. The Sub-Committee's terms

of reference are to foster and expand the bird ringing activities of the Society generally, and particularly to examine the possibility of setting up some form of L.N.H.S. trapping station.

Completed schedules should be returned to the Bird Ringing Secretary, please, as early as possible in September. The price of rings remains unchanged at 1s 10d per packet of 20.

## Review

FITTER, R. S. R. (1949). "London's Birds." Pp. 256. Photos. London: Collins. 10/6.

Even to those "non-Londoners" who consider a record of a Grey Wagtail in St. James's Park an absurd emphasis on an unimportant detail, R. S. R. Fitter's book will be of considerable interest; it is a very readable account of the bird ecology of a great city. The chapters are arranged according to ecological habitats, such as buildings, ground, trees and shrubs, marshes, the Thames and the air. The air as a habitat tends rather to be taken for granted, and to draw attention to it is no doubt a useful addition, although this chapter is largely concerned with feeding habits, not all of which are directly concerned with the air.

The theme of the book is a discussion of the various ways in which birds have become adapted to an urban existence, and emphasis is rightly laid on what are considered to be changes in habits; so that this work may be regarded as a definite contribution to the ecology of birds. It may come as a surprise to many that such an enormous area of buildings provides suitable living conditions for birds of the more adaptable kinds and there is a remarkable variety of these. One cannot do better than include the following two quotations from the author: "To a bird the City of London must appear as a net-work of narrow canyons, faced by tall cliffs with numerous ledges and crannies, almost sterile of animal and plant life, but providing an abundance of nesting sites". "A tolerance of the presence of man and a propensity for scavenging are both important".

The general ecological problems involved may well be simpler in London than in the more normal rural habitats but further study of them would doubtless be of great help in unravelling the more general principles. This book suggests some of the many problems awaiting investigation by London's naturalists, for example, local observation on migration, further information on roosting (the knowledge of which at present seems surprisingly small), and of the complex habits of such birds as Starlings and Sparrows, as well as the more routine details of distribution. Anyone writing on such a large subject must inevitably deal more adequately with some sections than others, and there can be little doubt that faunal surveys of this nature are bound to be subject to errors when based on individual observation and opinions. Since a

more comprehensive work is now under preparation by the Society. comment on matters of detail are here omitted, except that it should be mentioned that several of the remarks on the roosting of Starlings in Central London are not borne out by recent investigations and there is little doubt that more intensive observation on other species is showing that some habits described as unusual are, in fact, quite regular.

Judged as a whole, however, the book treats the subject in a novel way and is a valuable commentary on the birds of the centre of London. Written in an easy style, it is meant to be read through, and is most entertaining. The wealth of records of both scientific and historic interest must represent a great deal of research. Such records as that of pigeons on St. Paul's as far back as A.D. 1385 give one a sense of basic stability in spite of the recent changes and effects on bird life which are described. The area under consideration is that of the administrative county of London, and it is important to bear this in mind when comparisons are made with the much larger area "covered" by the L.N.H.S. The selection of photographs is good and appropriate and there are two clear maps.

G. B

## On Sending in Records

**T**HE Recorders welcome notes on London birds from members and non-members alike, and will be pleased to send particulars of our annual programme of recording and field work on request.

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G. E. Manser,  
279 Clockhouse Road,  
Beckenham, Kent.

A map of the Society's Area may be obtained from the General Secretary, price 1/-.



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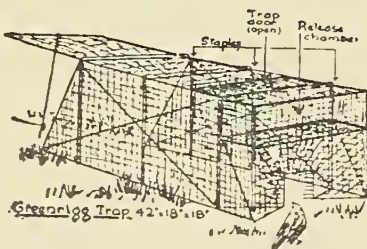
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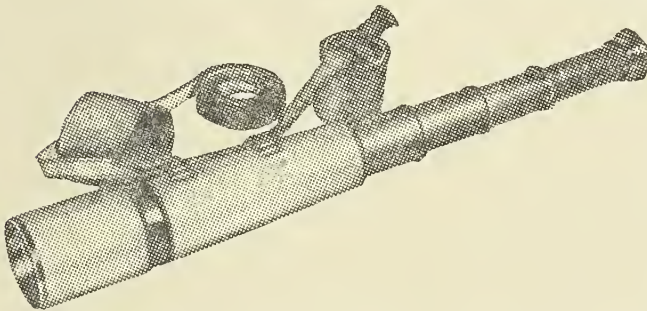
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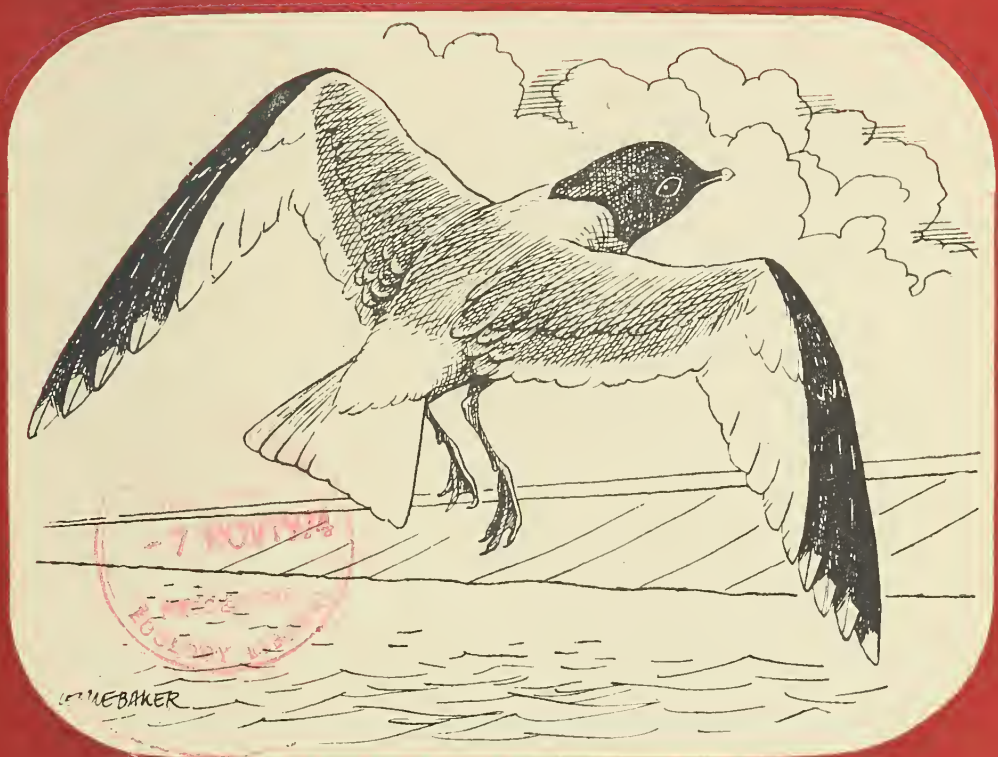
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# THE LONDON BIRD REPORT

— No. 15 —



Published February 1952 by

THE LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

NUMBER FIFTEEN · 1950 · PRICE: TWO SHILLINGS & SIXPENCE



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ploughman—  
Shrewd as a  
farmer’s wife”*



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# THE LONDON BIRD REPORT

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Published February 1952 by

**THE LONDON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

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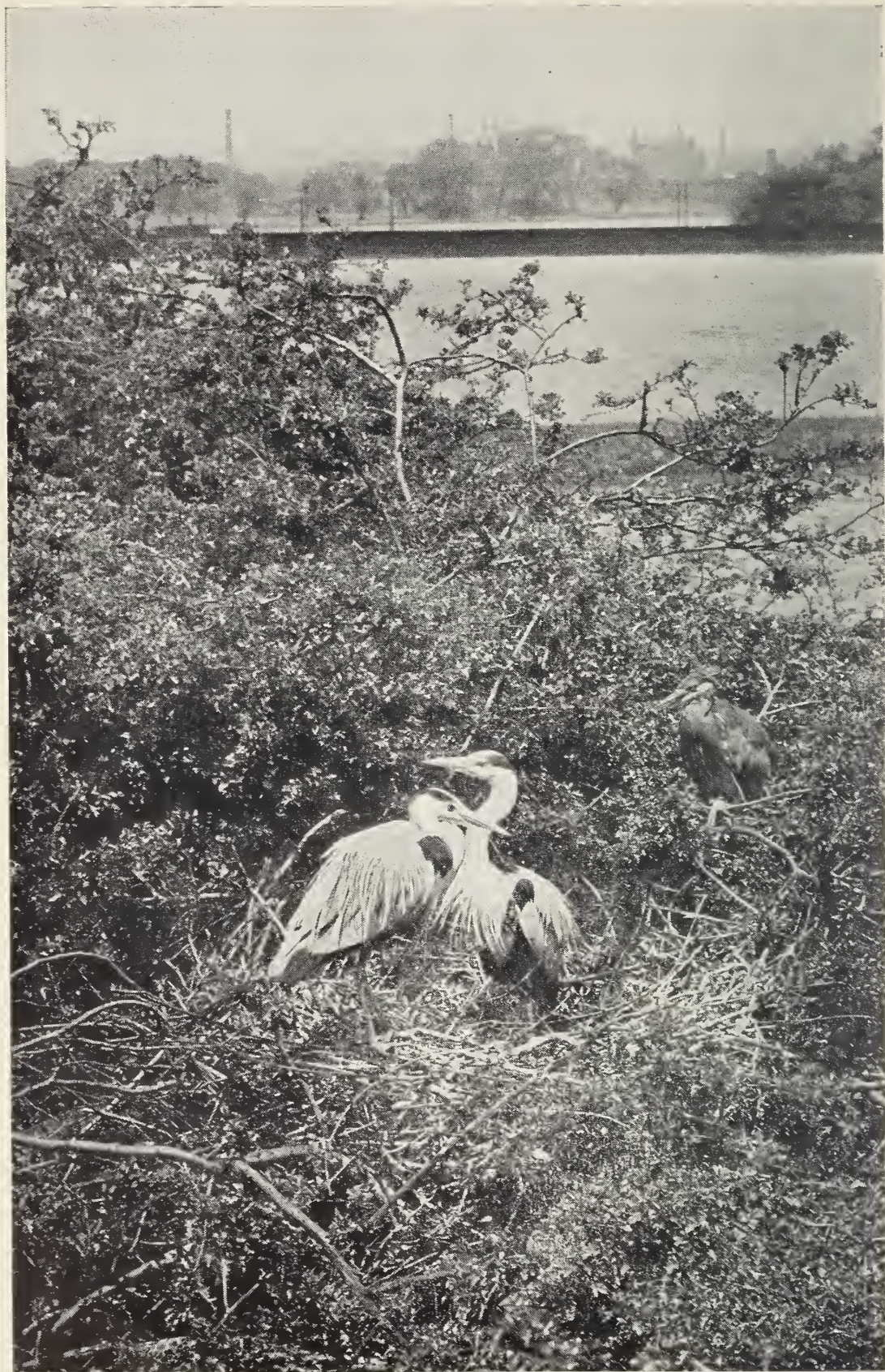
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THE drawing on the cover by Leslie Baker is of the adult Sabine's Gull seen at Staines Reservoirs, Middlesex, in September 1950 (see p. 39).





HERONS NESTING AT WALTHAMSTOW.

*Photographed by Eric Hosking.*

Results of the census of nesting Herons in the London Area are given on p. 47.



# The London Bird Report 1950

Edited by

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## Introduction

A HALF CENTURY OF LONDON BIRDWATCHING came to a close with the ending of 1950. Fifty years of careful records will presently go to the making of a book about the birds of London and its surroundings. This book, which is being prepared by members of the Ornithological Section of the Society, will tell a story of adaptability, change and surprising variety in the bird life of a region dominated by the biggest city in the world. In the meantime, we present the Report for 1950 to continue our annual detailed history of the wild birds of this region, and to give the latest findings of the Section's field surveys, which are now yielding tangible results of considerable interest.

In the hope of obtaining for this special year as comprehensive a set of records as possible, we appealed in late 1949 for extra information on a number of selected species. The keen response, and a general increase in the volume of contributed material, resulted in a heavy year for the Committee and involved unusual delay in the publication of the present *Report*. The number of our contributors has risen to over 330, which is about a third more than last year and three times as many as in the last full year before the war.

One of the most interesting things about the breeding records has been the realisation that the Wood-Lark is continuing to increase both north and south of the Thames; so much so that approximately 45 pairs or presumed pairs were found in 1950, compared with 27 pairs the year before. Some of these London Wood-Larks, nesting as they do on well-trampled commons on the very edge of the suburbs, successfully withstand much disturbance. But a pair nesting on Hayes Common in Kent deserted when the unseasonable falls of snow in April obliterated their nest and broke big limbs from horse-chestnuts whose newly expanded leaves held a greater weight of snow than their branches could bear. Four nests of Chaffinches, two of Linnets and nine of Song-Thrushes and Blackbirds were known to have been destroyed by the snow on this common. From gardens in Surrey there were reports of broken down bushes and conifers, and losses by Blackbirds, Hedge-Sparrows and

Chaffinches, while a pair of Robins nesting in a garage at Epsom were unable to reach their young, which died.

Red-backed Shrikes returned in force in the spring with forty-two pairs, including one pair on Wandsworth Common, only five miles from St. Paul's. An aeroplane standing out on the airfield at Park Street (Herts.) was used as a look-out post by a Red-backed Shrike, which unconcernedly perched on it. The nesting distribution of the Tree-Sparrow in the Area is a subject about which much still remains to be discovered; but at least we know now that some fifty pairs were nesting in 1950 in a comparatively small area in Hertfordshire. In contrast, there were probably less than ten pairs each of Grey Wagtails, Stonechats, Wrynecks and Grasshopper-Warblers. These four species, however, have little in common save their low representation. The Grey Wagtail as a breeding bird is better known among fast hill streams and we count ourselves fortunate in having half a dozen breeding pairs. For the other three species, however, there are plenty of apparently suitable habitats in the Area, and their scarcity is more a reflection of their present status in Southern England generally than a locally low population.

The variety of breeding birds in the built up districts within a few miles of the City continues to capture the imagination. Some, such as the Crows, Greenfinches, Mistle-Thrushes and Great Spotted Woodpeckers, seek the comparative seclusion of the central parks. But what are we to think of the pair of Jays which tried to nest in a plane tree on the pavement outside the Rembrandt Hotel in busy Thurloe Place? Was this the pair which started nesting the year before in a similar situation in Cromwell Road, a quarter of a mile away? Another bold Jay chased a Yellow Underwing in the Woodford Road and stopped the traffic in both directions when it beat the moth to earth before flying off with it. Of no little interest were the two juvenile Hawfinches seen near Lord's, where a singing male was heard in 1947 and 1949. A Nightingale sang in Regent's Park on April 26th, and another appeared in the green oasis of Wandsworth Common on June 9th. Sedge-Warblers and Garden-Warblers, Blackcaps and Whitethroats—even a Barn-Owl and a September Turtle-Dove—visited the inner London parks. At Islington, the scene of John Gilpin's famous ride, a Puffin which arrived in late September had almost as diverting a history and had its photograph taken for *The Star*. A more incongruous sight than a live Puffin in the Liverpool Road is hard to imagine, yet it had been surpassed in January when a Turnstone, that little wader of sea-weed covered rocks, mussel beds and tide-washed shingle, was found limping on a bombed site beside what is left of Chelsea Old Church, separated from the Thames by a broad highway of buses, lorries and other noisy traffic.

Waders in so thoroughly land-locked a region as is the London Area resort mainly to the sewage farms and reservoirs. This is no new habit, indeed it has been known for many years; but it is now perhaps more widely appreciated than ever and the fascination of seeing waders, often at much closer range than is usual on the coast, takes more birdwatchers

to these places more often. From the notable localities we have almost daily accounts throughout the autumn. There are records again this year of both the Godwits, of Curlew and Whimbrel, of Knots, Green-shanks, Grey Plovers and many others. Ten Dotterel came in August to London Airport, and several of them remained for a few days on some rough, broken ground adjoining the Perry Oaks sewage farm. A Grey Phalarope appeared near Staines and two occurred in September at the Brent Reservoir, where they could be seen swimming about with characteristic tameness in the shallows and seeking food on the marshy verge, taking no notice of birdwatchers within a yard or two of them. On a single pool at Perry Oaks there were present one day in September an American Pectoral Sandpiper, a Baird's Sandpiper, two Little Stints, eleven Curlew-Sandpipers, several Ringed Plovers and Dunlins, and a winter plumaged Sanderling; all together and visible at the same time. This must rank as one of the most remarkable associations of birds seen in the London Area for many years. The presence of two Sabine's Gulls on the near-by Staines reservoirs made it possible to see these rare gulls and the Baird's and Pectoral Sandpipers—three Northern Nearctic species—all on the same day; a unique experience in Britain.

Flocks of migrating Cormorants were seen flying over the Staines reservoirs on three dates in September, heading south or south-east, and at about this time a Gannet appeared there, dwarfing the Great Black-backed Gulls which were flying near it. Weather conditions for seeing diurnal migration, particularly of passerines, were especially favourable in the middle of October, and to watchers on high roof tops in central London and at several vantage points in the suburbs large numbers of flying migrants were clearly visible in the early mornings. The full results of this interesting work will be published later. Another feature of the autumn passage as seen around London was the late departure of some of the migrants. Black Terns were noted as late as mid-October and the last of the Pied Flycatchers on Hampstead Heath (where up to six were present in August and September) was seen on October 29th. Some Yellow Wagtails lingered until November 12th.

Of our winter visitors the Bramblings were notable in that in the early months of 1950 they occurred in much larger numbers than usual. Two Crossbills were seen stripping cones in the grounds of the Royal Liberty School at Gidea Park in January, there was a minor irruption of Waxwings, and a Firecrest was discovered at Wimbledon in March. A male Snow-Bunting was feeding on a patch of open land near the Brent Reservoir in industrial Hendon on November 5th, and one was seen at Perry Oaks a week later. A Water-Pipit which was compared with near-by Rock-Pipits was satisfactorily identified on the Thames marshes on Christmas Eve, and a strange species for the Area was the Storm-Petrel which was seen both at rest and in flight over Staines Reservoir on November 11th. In the rough weather of February a "wreck" of Little Auks occurred in England, and the remains of one of these storm-driven birds were found at Staines. On the flooded banks

of the River Colne on Staines Moor wild White-fronted Geese and a single Pink-foot were seen during December, and Brents occurred at Hamper Mill and on the Thames marshes at Swanscombe.

In earlier centuries, when the marshes in London extended all along the south bank of the Thames, Bearded Tits could be found nesting near what has since become the site of the South Bank Exhibition, and Harriers used to be seen above the reeds of Battersea and Bermondsey. Nowadays, the London marshes are more restricted but nevertheless the stretch below Erith held many interesting species in 1950, including a wandering Hen Harrier for five days in October. Probably the same bird was seen again in December. Peregrines were noted on these marshes from time to time, while at Staines one again wintered and was often seen about the reservoirs. A Merlin which came upon a flock of Yellowhammers at Colney Street was seen to chase and kill one of them sixty feet above Old Parkbury gravel pit, and another Merlin was seen at Epsom. There are some records of Buzzards (including one over Ranelagh Gardens, Chelsea), usually soaring and drifting overhead at a height; and of Hobbies in late summer and autumn. Several Short-eared Owls were reported, and two were seen with the December harrier on the Thames-side marshes.

Bird ringing is now carried out by the Section on a large scale. The 1950 total was 3085, the highest for some time. In the three years of the Starling survey 4000 of these birds have been ringed, 2500 of them at the familiar roost in Trafalgar Square. On pages 58-60 is an interim report on this work, which is still in progress. It may come as a surprise to learn that this roost, which at its height in June and July holds nearly 100,000 birds, is believed to consist, even in winter, almost entirely of British-born Starlings. Of 125 recoveries of birds ringed at the roost, two were in Holland but all the rest were in Britain, mostly in the London Area. About 1500 Starlings have been ringed in the suburbs, and of these many local recoveries have been notified and six have been re-taken at Trafalgar Square. But not all the interesting recoveries are of Starlings. The Tufted Ducks which hob-nob with the park fowl in St. James's in winter may be found in summer and autumn on the far lakes and rivers of Sweden, Finland and Siberia, involving journeys of up to some 2000 miles. Two more such recoveries have been notified this year. In March a Scaup, ringed as a juvenile on Lake Myvatn in Iceland three years before, was found dead on one of the reservoirs at Barnes. A Black-headed Gull which wintered in the London Area in 1949 was recovered in the spring of 1950 at Horsens, on the eastern side of the peninsula of Jutland. Ringing has repeatedly shown that Denmark and Sweden, including the archipelago of islands at the gateway to the Baltic, receive in spring and summer some of the Black-headed Gulls which spend the winter in London. A December Chaffinch which gladly accepted food in a Cricklewood garden may well have nested in the rapidly awakening spring of the Arctic Circle, for it was discovered in August near the Lulea River in north-eastern Sweden.

Census-taking of selected species in the London Area is yielding most interesting results as the years pass and the work is continued. We have reached the half-way mark of the ten year sample census of Great Crested Grebes, and can appreciate from the figures given on pages 46-48 of the *Report* that the breeding population of these birds in the Area is higher now than at any period for which we have records, and two and a half times as high as nineteen years ago. The extent of the recovery since the severe winter of early 1947 is revealed clearly by the published figures, which show the 1950 summer population as 57% up on that of the breeding season immediately preceding the cold spell. Herons, which were reduced to 118 pairs in 1947, made a similarly striking recovery with 186 breeding pairs in 1950 and 204 pairs in 1951, including a return to the ancient site, for many years deserted, in Osterley Park, Middlesex. Our two especial colonists, the Little Ringed Plover and the Black Redstart, are each year the subject of organised effort in determining their numbers, territories and nesting success. Little Ringed Plovers were up to strength with at least twelve pairs, and Black Redstarts increased to fifteen pairs in the City and elsewhere.

The review of the monthly census of ducks given on pages 53-57 brings the story up to the close of the 1950-51 winter. From it we see that the numerous inland waters of the London Area may hold a population of nearly ten thousand ducks in an average winter, and that most of these are Mallards, Tufted Ducks and Pochard. The numbers of Mallard between October 1950 and January 1951 were in the region of four thousand, with a variation of only a few hundred either way. The peak winter population of Tufted Ducks is remarkably steady at 2500-3000, while the Pochard average winter maximum is about a thousand. With the approach of summer, most of the diving ducks leave us, but a few pairs of Tufteds breed each year and Pochard do so occasionally. Many of our Shoveler occur on passage, but six pairs were present in the nesting season at Staines, and one pair was seen with downy young, the third breeding record for Middlesex. Garganey were again in the Poyle area between March and May, and flying young were seen at Rainham, Essex, but still we are unable to obtain conclusive evidence of nesting.

Our thanks go to our many helpers: to R. S. Ashley, Leslie Baker, A. W. Bartlett, Douglas Carr, F. J. L. Mitchell, A. F. Myers, D. C. Pegram, D. E. Pomeroy, Mr. and Mrs G. J. Spence, and Prof. E. H. Warming-ton for valued aid in various forms; to Leslie Baker again for his drawing of the Sabine's Gull, and to Eric Hosking for the frontispiece; to the Editors of *British Birds*, the officers of the Essex Bird Watching Society, the Royal Society for Protection of Birds, the British Empire Naturalists Association, the Zoological Society of London and the Committee on Bird Sanctuaries in the Royal Parks, for a welcome exchange of records. The Metropolitan Water Board, the Middlesex County Council and the Thames River Police receive our grateful acknowledgment of many kindnesses. Finally, to our record number of 336 contributors we offer our thanks and congratulations on a highly interesting year.

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E. C. Ormerod.  
K. H. Palmer.  
W. D. Park.  
Mrs. G. M. Parkinson.  
L. Parmenter.  
D. Parr.  
E. R. Parrinder.  
J. L. Parslow.  
C. H. F. Parsons.  
D. Patten (per G.E.M.).  
J. R. Pattison.  
L. W. Payne (per W.G.T.).  
R. M. Payne.  
D. B. Peakall.  
E. W. Pearce.  
Miss J. E. Peck.  
E. G. Pedler.  
D. C. Pegram.  
Miss E. Perry (per T.L.B.).  
J. H. Pertwee.  
Miss J. E. Petchey (per T.L.B.).  
A. V. Pettit.  
Dr. W. R. Philipson.  
B. P. Pickess.  
D. Polding (per T.L.B.).  
D. E. Pomeroy.  
M. Potter (per C.B.A.).  
H. E. Pounds.
- H. M. Pratt.  
N. H. Pratt.  
Mrs. I. Purdom.  
Miss M. Purdom.  
G. A. Pyman.  
D. A. Rawlence.  
W. R. Ray.  
G. M. Redhead.  
J. E. Rednall.  
Comdr. J. Mansel Reese.  
Miss A. M. V. Reid (per G.E.M.).  
B. A. Richards.  
M. Ridpath.  
J. N. A. Rignall.  
F. Riley (per P.F.C.R.).  
C. C. Rose.  
H. W. Rudd.  
P. F. C. Rumsey.  
W. Rutledge.  
R. H. M. Ryall.  
B. L. Sage.  
Miss E. Sartoris.  
T. Sayers.  
G. L. Scott.  
P. S. Sellick (per P.D.).  
R. E. Sharland.  
W. Shipp.  
P. E. L. Simmonds.  
H. G. Singleton.  
R. P. Smith (per G.E.M.).  
W. V. Smith (per W.G.T.).  
Mrs. E. Souter.  
Miss P. Souter.  
Mrs. A. K. Spence.  
G. J. Spence.  
R. Spencer.  
G. Stewart (per C.B.A.).  
Miss E. J. Strömberg.  
W. C. Taunton.  
G. Taylor.  
J. E. Taylor.  
K. S. Taylor (per G.E.M.).  
W. G. Teagle.  
A. G. G. Thompson.  
Dr. W. W. Thomson.  
A. V. Tucker.  
Mrs. M. Turner (per G.E.M.).  
C. M. Vesey.  
W. Vincent.  
N. J. P. Wadley.  
Miss M. E. Wain (per W.G.T.).  
I. Walker.  
D. I. M. Wallace.  
C. A. Walter (C.A.Wr.).

(Continued on p. 60)

# Birds of the London Area 1950

## A REPORT ON BIRD LIFE WITHIN TWENTY MILES OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

THE number preceding the name of each species refers to Witherby's *Check-List of British Birds* (1941), where the full scientific name will be found. All records are for 1950 except where otherwise stated. The initials following each record indicate the observer(s) responsible for it. The six counties within the circle of twenty miles radius are indicated by their initials, *viz.*:—B=Bucks.; E.=Essex; H=Herts.; K = Kent; M = Middlesex; S = Surrey. Records from the Thames between Richmond and Putney, and from the adjacent Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road Reservoirs, are grouped under T owing to the frequent movements between these reservoirs and the river. The Report for 1950 of the Essex Bird Watching and Preservation Society is referred to by the initials E.B.W.P.S. The following abbreviations are also used:—*B.B.* = *British Birds* magazine; *L.B.R.* = *London Bird Report*; G.P. = gravel pit; Res. = reservoir; S.F. = sewage farm.

The response to the Special Species enquiries referred to on p. 1 resulted in much interesting material being added to our files. Comparatively little of it, however, has found a place in the following report because if taken out of its proper context of 50 years of records much of its significance is lost. It will be of value in the compilation of the book. General principles guiding the selection of material for annual publication are indicated on p. 4 of the *L.B.R.* for 1949.

An open map of the London Area will be found useful for a full appreciation of many of the records. As the history of some of the species is intended to be continuous, reference to the systematic lists of previous issues of the *L.B.R.* is recommended.

### 2 Hooded Crow

H Watford S.F. and Hamper Mill, one on Jan. 1, Jan. 14 and Feb. 2 (G.K.M.C.C., W.D.V., W.H.D.W.); one on Oct. 28 and Nov. 4 (P.R.K., B.P.P.).

M Greenford, four with a flock of Carrion-Crows on Nov. 19 (F.H.J.).

### 3 Carrion-Crow

M/S Inner London: nested successfully in Battersea Park (four pairs, J.N.A.R.), Brondesbury, Kensington Gardens, Victoria Park and Westminster (R.H.G., C.H.F.P., W.G.T.); Temple, one pair responsible for three nests (A.H.B., see *B.B.*, 44, p. 89); attempted to nest in Regent's Park and St. James's Park (E.C.W., E.H.W.); probably nested in Cavendish Square (S.C.) and Ranelagh Gardens, Chelsea (P.D., T.S., W.G.T.).



**4 Rook**

M Inner London, Manchester Square, three flying N.W. on Sept. 14 (D.I.M.W.). [Records received from Cripplegate, South Kensington and Kensington Gardens suggest the presence of birds which had been hand-reared and liberated. None of these Rooks behaved as though wild, and they occurred outside the normal migration periods. The Zoological Society receives many enquiries concerning the rearing of young Rooks.]

**5 Jackdaw**

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, a few pairs nested but no young were seen (C.H.F.P.).

**7 Magpie**

M Inner London, Brompton Cemetery, the bird reported in *L.B.R.*, 1949, p. 7, remained until Feb. 22 (M.C.).

S Farleigh, c. 80 on approx. one acre in December (A.J.H.).

**10/11 Jay**

M/S Inner London: young birds seen in Battersea Park, Brompton Cemetery, Green Park, Holland Park, Kensington Gardens and St. James's Park (M.C., E.M.N., C.H.F.P. *et al.*); South Kensington, a pair attempted to nest in a plane tree outside the Rembrandt Hotel in Thurloe Place (L.G.H., T.S.); recorded from Bayswater, Chelsea, Lambeth Palace, Notting Hill, Paddington Cemetery, Regent's Park and St. John's Wood.

**14 Starling**

For an interim report on the Starling Enquiry, see pp. 58-59.

**18 Hawfinch**

E Stifford, a juvenile on Aug. 19 (M.J.A.).

H Elstree, one pair bred (E.H.W.).

M Breeding recorded at Ruislip (T.L.B., B.P.P., N.H.P.) and Stanmore (E.H.W., W.H.D.W.). Inner London: Regent's Park, a male on Mar. 30 (s.c.); St. John's Wood, two juveniles in Elm Tree Road on Aug. 24 (H.M.R.K.; *cf.* *L.B.R.*, 1949, p. 8, and *B.B.*, 41, p. 335). Highgate Woods, one pair bred in 1949 (G.E.).

K Nested at Beckenham (J.S.S.B.), Bickley (F.J.H.) and Orpington (A.H.B.).

S Kew Gardens, max. four pairs, Jan.-Apr.; at least one pair known to have bred (J.W.L.). Purley, young seen with adults on July 14 (J.M.C.). Tooting Common, adult feeding juvenile on June 22 (C.J.O.H.).

**19 Greenfinch**

M/S Inner London: a nest found in Battersea Park (J.N.A.R.) and young seen on Primrose Hill and in Victoria Park (s.c., w.G.T.); probably nested in Kensington Gardens and Regent's Park.

**20 Goldfinch**

M/S Inner London: Battersea Park, two pairs nested successfully (E.M.N., J.N.A.R.); young seen at Brompton Cemetery, Primrose Hill and Victoria Park (M.C., S.C., W.G.T.); noted in the breeding season at Brondesbury and Regent's Park (W.G.T., E.H.W.); other records (Jan.-Mar. and July-Dec.) from Chelsea, Cripplegate, Fetter Lane, Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, and St. John's Wood.

**21 Siskin**

M Winter parties of up to 12 reported from Roxeth, Southall, Stanmore and Uxbridge. Ruislip, max. c. 30 on Feb. 5 (F.H.J.).

K Beckenham, one on Oct. 25 (A.J.H.). Shoreham, 30 on Dec. 17 (J.S.S.B.).

S Flocks of up to 25 noted between January and March at Esher Common, Ham Common and Selsdon; up to eight at Godstone and on Wimbledon Common.

**25 Lesser Redpoll**

M Hampstead Heath, one pair bred (M.F.B.B., G.T.). Stanmore, two young in garden in usual breeding area on Aug. 25; Mill Hill, one young on allotments on Aug. 27 (E.H.W.). Inner London, Kensington Gardens, a party of four or five on Jan. 8 (E.McE.).

**30 Linnet**

M/S Inner London, Battersea Park, one on Apr. 11 (J.N.A.R.); Cripplegate, one on Mar. 15, Apr. 23 and Dec. 21 (E.H.W., R.B.W.).

**36 Crossbill**

E Gidea Park, two watched stripping cones in a line of three or four pines in the grounds of the Royal Liberty School, Jan. 13-14 (R.H. in E.B.W.P.S., p. 7).

**40/41 Chaffinch**

M One ringed at Cricklewood on 31.xii.49 by J.F.D. was recovered at Harads, Lulea River, N. Sweden (c. 66° N., 21° E.) on 12.viii.50.

**42 Brambling**

The records for the early months of 1950, when fairly large flocks of Bramblings occurred, are notable in that the flocks persisted at a number of widely-spaced localities over a considerable period, and doubtless represented a much larger wintering population than known previously, at least in recent years. With the exception of c. 50 at Beddington S.F. in December, 1949, there was no evidence of large numbers before the turn of the year. In January, February and March, however, flocks of the order of 50 or 60 were recorded from Rickmansworth, Watford, Hampstead, Elmers End, Erith and Swanley; while the flock at Beddington continued and rose to c. 70 on Apr. 1. The largest party was seen at Eynsford (Kent), where 200-250 accompanied Chaffinches and Goldfinches in an orchard on Feb. 19. Detailed records are as follow:

E Epping Forest, two in Bury Wood on Apr. 2 (P.F.C.R.).

- H Colney Street, five at Old Parkbury on Feb. 18 (E.H.W.). S.W. Rickmansworth, 30 on Jan. 8, over 60 on Jan. 17, 20 on Mar. 16, one on Apr. 16 (E.A.G., H.F.G.). Watford S.F., one on Feb. 4 (W.H.D.W.) and c. 50 on Feb. 19 (B.P.P.). In December one to two were seen at Rickmansworth and Moor Park (H.F.G., B.P.P.).
- M Brent Res. noted from Jan. 1 to Feb. 19, usually up to four, but eleven on Feb. 19 (A.G. *et al.*). Bushy Park, up to five, Mar. 9-22 (E.M.G., E.W.P.). Finchley, four between Jan. 14 and Mar. 11 (S.K.). Hampstead Heath and vicinity of Ken Wood, up to about 20, Jan.-Mar., but c. 50 on Feb. 26 (V.R.G., E.N.H. *et al.*). Hendon Way, six on Mar. 18 (D.V.F.). King George VI Res., nine on Jan. 16 (R.S.M.G.). Perry Oaks S.F., up to six from Jan. 15 to Mar. 12, with 16 on Feb. 19 (P.J.H., W.N.M. *et al.*). Staines Moor, up to c. 10, Jan. 4-March 11 (H.P.M., W.H.D.W.). Stanmore Common, one on Mar. 8 (W.H.D.W.). In December, one was seen at the Brent Res. (J.Fd., R.E.J., E.H.W.) and eight at Longford (H.A.B.).
- K Elmers End S.F., c. 45 on Mar. 12 and 12-20 from Mar. 17 to Apr. 9 (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.). Erith, c. 55 on Mar. 20 (W.I.B.). Eynsford, between 200 and 250 in an orchard on Feb. 19, and c. 40 there on Apr. 2 (J.S.S.B.). Farningham Woods, two to three on Feb. 19 (W.I.B.). Near Swanley, two parties each of c. 50 birds on Feb. 21 (E.M.H.). St. Mary Cray, one on Feb. 19 (J.S.S.B.). In December one was seen on Stone Marshes (J.F.B.).
- S Beddington S.F., the flock of c. 50 reported on Dec. 27, 1949 (*cf. L.B.R.*, 1949, p. 10), continued into January (with c. 50 on Jan. 2) and subsequently; maxima c. 45 on Mar. 22, 58 on Mar. 26, c. 70 on Apr. 1; the last seen there were c. 35 on Apr. 10 (many observers). Richmond Park, six to ten on Mar. 17, Apr. 2, Apr. 6 (R.W.Hn.). Walton Heath, c. 24 on Apr. 1 (A.G.). Up to five recorded, Jan.-Mar., from Epsom S.F., Esher S.F., Ham Common and G.P., and Walton G.P. Between October and December up to five were noted at Chipstead, Headley, Mickleham, Norbury Park, Tadworth and Walton Heath (H.B.).

#### 43 Corn-Bunting

- E Noted in summer in the Upminster-Rainham district (M.J.A.).
- H Shenley, a singing male from May 19 to July 26 (W.D.M., E.H.W.). Watford S.F., two to three on Dec. 19 (B.P.P.).
- M Mill Hill, two on Jan. 3 (E.H.W.). Southall, one on July 20 (P.J.H.). Staines-Harmondsworth area, recorded in the breeding season and up to December; max. three to five pairs at Perry Oaks and four singing males at Heathrow, Apr.-July (many observers). Brent Res., one on Dec. 13 (E.H.W.).
- K Records of singing males and confirmation of nesting received from all the marshes between Abbey Wood and Northfleet; certainly eight, probably twelve, pairs bred (W.I.B., J.F.B. *et al.*). Longfield, two singing males in April and two pairs seen in July; Lullingstone, four singing males in June (J.S.S.B., W.I.B.).
- S Walton G.P., two singing in July (K.P.K., D.P.).

**49 Cirl Bunting**

H Watford S.F., a male on Apr. 22 (B.P.P., N.H.P.).

K Stone, a male on Apr. 20 (W.I.B.).

S Betchworth, one singing on Apr. 5 and June 24 (A.J.H., P.A.D.H.).  
Chaldon, a pair on May 28 (R.O.B.). Wimbledon Common, a male  
on May 21 and June 15-17 (J.M.R.; satisfactory details received).

**59 Snow-Bunting**

M Brent Res., a male on Nov. 5 (R.E.J.). Perry Oaks S.F., one on  
Nov. 12 (V.H.B., D.A.B., J.F., F.H.J., J.E.P.; full supporting details  
have been received of both these records).

**62 Tree-Sparrow**

Non-breeding season flocks exceeding 30 birds were reported in  
eleven localities from all counties except Essex and the small part  
of Bucks. within the London Area. Flocks of between 100 and 200  
birds were seen at Barnet (Nov.), Brent Res. (Dec.), Perry Oaks  
S.F. (Mar., Sept. and Oct.) and Beddington S.F. (Nov.).

E Bred, one-two pairs each, at Chingford (Lea Valley, s.k.), Seward-  
stonebury and Sewardstone Green (A.E.J.). Noted in the breeding  
season at several places in the triangle formed by Romford, Chip-  
ping Ongar and Brentwood (K.D.G.M., R.B.W.).

H As a result of several days' special study by s.k., and further evi-  
dence from A.G. and E.H.W., it appears that approximately fifty  
pairs bred at eight localities in the area Colney Street, Colney  
Heath, North Mimms, Ridge, Dyrham Park, Arkley. Cheshunt  
Marshes, 12-20 on June 4 (B.L.S.).

M Circumstantial evidence received of numerous pairs breeding in the  
Osterley Park, West Drayton, Staines area (H.A.B., K.V.E., C.A.W.).

K Bred at Dartford Marshes (six pairs, J.S.S.B., J.F.B.) and Elmers End  
S.F. (two pairs, G.E.M.).

S Bred at Beddington S.F. (11 pairs, E.M.A., B.S.M.), Richmond Park  
(two pairs, R.W.H.N.) and Walton G.P. (K.P.K.).

**69 Wood-Lark**

At least 17 pairs were known to have bred in the London Area in  
1950, out of an approximate total of 45 pairs or presumed pairs in  
the breeding season. Interest in London birds steadily increases  
and every year we receive a greater volume of records than the  
year before, suggesting that the likelihood of pairs being missed  
reduces annually. The 1950 figures for Wood-Larks, however, are so  
much larger than those recorded previously, even in 1949, that it is  
clear that the species is in fact succeeding more and more around  
London, and that the higher returns are not entirely due to im-  
proved reporting. In 1946, for example, (*cf. L.B.R.*, 1946, p. 7)  
eleven pairs certainly bred out of a known population of 17 or 18  
pairs—only about half the numbers present and nesting in 1950.

E Epping Forest, apparently two pairs bred: on July 8 a fully-  
fledged young bird, and a hen carrying food, were seen in different

- localities (s.k.). Hainault Forest, a pair and one fully-fledged juvenile on June 9 (K.D.G.M.). In the country round Brentwood a pair was seen at Warley on Mar. 11, one singing in Weald Park on Apr. 1 and one singing in Thorndon Park on May 13 (R.B.W.).
- H Six singing males were located on the 2½ miles of the Barnet By-Pass between Stirling Corner and Dyrham Park, one singing male at Ridge, two at Ridghill and one at Radlett (s.k.). Shenley, one rose from grass on June 20 but was not seen subsequently (E.H.W.).
- M Bushy Park, two singing males, Feb.-July (E.M.G., E.W.P.). Ruislip, one pair reared two broods (T.L.B., G.K.M.C.C., B.P.P., N.H.P.). Scratch Wood, one pair bred just inside the Middlesex boundary (E.H.W.); the male of this pair was evidently one of the six singing males of the Barnet By-Pass referred to above. Stanmore, three pairs (two bred) at Bentley Priory (E.H.W.).
- K Dartford Heath, a pair on Feb. 19 (G.B.). Hayes Common, one pair nested unsuccessfully (J.S.S.B., J.F.B., G.E.M.). Keston Common, a singing male on two dates in May (A.J.H.). Polhill, near Shoreham, two feeding in short grass on Apr. 16 (A.E.J.).
- S Nested at Ham Common (two pairs, F.R.M., E.M.R.), Putney Heath (one pair, R.W.H.N.), Richmond Park (four to five pairs probably, two nests found, P.C., R.W.H.N.), Wimbledon Common (five pairs in territory, young seen, H.P.M., J.M.R., E.S., P.S.); and at Banstead (one pair on Park Downs, L.I.C.), Fetcham Downs (one pair, A.H.H.) and Limpsfield Chart (one pair, C.J.O.). Records of pairs or singing males between March and October have been received from Epsom Common, Prince's Coverts, Esher Common and Oxshott Heath, Mickleham (two singing) and Reigate Heath. Surbiton Golf Course, a pair on Apr. 20-22 but not subsequently (D.P.). Barn Elms, one on allotments in snowy weather, Dec. 17 (R.W.H.N.).

### 75 Tree-Pipit

- M Inner London, Westminster Abbey, one in the College Garden on May 6 (S.C., W.G.T.).

### 79 Water-Pipit

- K Stone Marshes, one with Rock-Pipits on the saltings on Dec. 24; Abbey Wood Marshes (about six miles W.N.W.), one with Meadow-Pipits on the Thames foreshore on Dec. 31 (J.F.B., K.H.P.). The following plumage details of the bird seen on Dec. 24 were noted in the field: head greyish-brown with noticeable whitish eye-stripes; throat and chin very light, whitish; breast whitish with a suggestion of a buff tinge, heavily streaked with dark brown, some streaks extending to whitish belly; rump and upper parts brown, not olivaceous; outer tail feathers prominently white; two pale, not very distinct, wing-bars due to light tips of coverts; legs and bill dark brown. The bird on Dec. 31 was said to have been similar.

**81 Rock-Pipit**

- E Walthamstow Res., one on Dec. 16 (H.W.R.).  
 K Dartford, Stone, Swanscombe and Northfleet Marshes, up to c. 50 between October and December (G.B., W.I.B., J.F.B., K.H.P.).  
 S Barn Elms Res., one on Oct. 7 (D.V.F.) and one on Dec. 6 (J.MCH.).

**Variant Yellow Wagtails**

Most of the following records refer either to birds similar to the typical Blue-headed Wagtail (*M. f. flava*) or to the mutant resembling the Sykes' form (*M. f. beema*), but some were apparently intermediate variants. Full systematic treatment would involve elaborate study. Even assuming that it could be based on field work without collecting, it would require the adoption by all the observers of a pre-arranged standardised system of note-taking and colour description; a state of affairs not yet achieved. We content ourselves for the moment with putting on record the facts which show that these puzzling wagtails are now occurring not infrequently in the Area.

- E Walthamstow Res., a male on Sept. 9 resembled *M. f. flava* (S.K.).  
 M Brent Res., one on Apr. 30 had no yellow except on upper and lower tail coverts and was similar to the top bird illustrated on Plate 6 of Stuart Smith's *The Yellow Wagtail* (J.E.R.); a male there on May 6 was a different bird, approaching the Sykes' form and having a small white eyestripe only behind the eye, and white extending from chin below and behind eye to give a collared effect (A.G.). At Staines Moor variants were noted by many observers on eight dates between Apr. 9 and May 30; a seemingly typical male Blue-headed was seen, besides a male more of the Sykes' form and a third male apparently different from either. This was described by D.E.P. as having ashy-grey bands over crown, black stripe through eye to ear coverts, whitish supercilium, upperparts greenish yellow, underparts very bright yellow.  
 K Elmers End S.F., up to three, all similar and lacking eyestripes, Apr. 29/30 (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.). Swanscombe Marshes, a male Blue-headed Wagtail on Aug. 7 with 50-60 Yellow Wagtails was still in typical plumage (J.F.B.).  
 S Beddington S.F., at least two different males between May 2 and June 3; one had pale blue-grey head, whitish chin, well-defined buffish white eyestripes; the other a slate-grey head, pale yellow chin and no eyestripes (B.S.M.).

**88 Yellow Wagtail**

- E Nested at Chingford (c. 6 pairs) and Sewardstone (E.R.P., P.F.C.R.).  
 H Moor Mill, one pair nested (W.D.M., M.R.).  
 M Brent Res., three to four pairs bred (J.F., E.H.W.). Mill Hill, three pairs bred (E.H.W.). Wormwood Scrubs, four pairs present in June, two pairs known to have bred (W.C.T.). The stronghold of the species in the county is the region bounded roughly by Staines and West Drayton, Colnbrook and Harlington; direct or circumstantial

evidence of breeding has been received from numerous localities in this area of approximately thirty square miles. One pair probably bred north of Harefield (H.F.G.). Late dates: one at Perry Oaks S.F. on Nov. 11 and Nov. 12 (E.E.G., A.J.H.; full supporting details have been received). This and other late records are published in *B.B.*, 44, p. 312.

M/S Inner London: Battersea Park, one on Apr. 29 (J.N.A.R.); Cripplegate, one on May 13 (P.W.E.C.); Hatcham New Town, S.E.15, one on May 4 (D.V.F.).

K At least 17 pairs nested on the Thames marshes between Greenwich and Northfleet (W.I.B., J.F.B.). Elmers End S.F., three pairs bred (G.E.M.).

S Nested at Barn Elms Res. (two to three pairs, E.W.F., J.R., A.G.G.T.), Beddington S.F. (three pairs, B.S.M.) and Ham G.P. (one pair, F.R.M.). Probably nested at Walton G.P. (two pairs, R.C.H.N., D.P.) and Wandsworth Sewage Works (one pair, H.G.A.).

### 89 Grey Wagtail

H Hamper Mill, a pair feeding young in nest in creeper-covered shell of a ruined building on July 25 (E.H.W.).

M Staines, a hen with fledgeling by the Wraysbury river on May 7 (E.W.F.).

K Farningham, hen seen feeding fledgeling on May 23; Westerham Mill Pond, one fledged young seen on June 28, and two young seen being fed in July (J.S.S.B.).

S Epsom S.F., one pair nested (H.B., L.I.C.). Godstone, one pair bred successfully (F.M.F.).

### 90 Pied Wagtail

H Moor Mill, a roost of c. 150 birds in a reed bed on Sept. 16 (W.D.M.); these birds came from London Colney, North and South Mimms (E.H.W.).

M Hanwell Broadway, eight apparently preparing to roost in a plane tree on Oct. 5 (H.A.B.). Ruislip Res., c. 200 roosted in reeds in September and October (T.L.B., B.P.P.).

Inner London, Cripplegate, two pairs nested (N.J.P.W. *et al.*); a cock was frequently seen taking food towards railway yards between West Kensington and Earls Court in early June (W.C.J.); a pair seen in St. James's Park collecting food on May 16 flew off towards Whitehall (A.J.Hy., W.G.T.).

K Crayford Creek, c. 460 roosting in a reed bed on Aug. 1 (W.I.B.). Foots Cray, c. 30 roosting in sallows by R. Cray on Mar. 2 (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.). The Hayes Common roost continued in use all the year (*cf.* *L.B.R.*, 1948, 1949); max. c. 60 in April (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.).

S Belmont, c. 20 birds roosted in *Prunus* sp. in gardens on each side of a residential road from about Oct. 10 onwards, but apparently not after the leaves had fallen (P.W.E.C.). Littleworth Common, up to c. 40 roosted in reeds, Jan.-Mar. (D.P.). Thornton Heath, the roost reported in the *L.B.R.* for 1949, p. 14, was occupied by a few birds in July and by c. 300 in August (M.T.).

### 91 White Wagtail

M Perry Oaks, Poyle, Staines area, up to four in April and May (H.P.M., W.N.M., B.A.R., C.A.W. *et al.*).

K Elmers End S.F., one on Apr. 17, Apr. 29 and May 5 (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.).

S Barn Elms Res., a male seen on several dates in April and May (G.R.E., A.G.G.T. *et al.*). Richmond Park, a male on Apr. 2 (R.W.H.N.).

### 93 Tree-Creeper

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, at least one pair nested (C.H.F.P.).

### 99/100 Blue Tit

M/S Inner London: a special watch was kept during the autumn to see if the large-scale influx of the previous year (*vide L.B.R.*, 1949, p. 14) would be repeated, but no exceptional increase in the tit population was noticed.

S One ringed at Carshalton on 1.i.50 by C.B.A. was recovered at West Hoathly, Sussex (20 m. S.), on 20.ii.50.

### 108 Willow-Tit

E Brentwood-Shenfield area, several pairs noted and nest and eggs found on June 7 (O.J.H.D. in E.B.W.P.S., p. 8).

H Rickmansworth area, one to two in Jan. and Feb. (P.J.H., A.J.H.). Old Parkbury, one on Dec. 9 (E.H.W.).

M Stanmore Common, one pair probably bred (W.H.D.W.). Up to six reported from Ruislip and Uxbridge, but not in the breeding season.

S Bookham Common, one to two noted in March and July-November (G.B.). Leatherhead, one on Feb. 22 (D.E.P.). Selsdon, two on Feb. 25 (J.A.) and one on Dec. 31 (A.J.H.). Tadworth, a pair on Jan. 1; Walton Heath, one on Feb. 12 (H.B.).

### 111 Long-tailed Tit

M/S Inner London: Battersea Park, a party of six to nine on Nov. 4 (J.E.P.); Holland Park, two on Feb. 11 (S.C.).

### 114 Great Grey Shrike

M Hampton Court, one on May 30 (E.L.C.; an unusual date but satisfactory details received). Ruislip Common, one seen from Nov. 11 to the end of the year (many observers).

S Walton Heath, one on Mar. 16 (J.S.S.B.). Wimbledon Common, one from Oct. 29 to Nov. 8 (C.M.A., B.A.R., W.G.T., A.G.G.T.). Chipstead, one on Dec. 28, 1949 (F. E. Briscoe in *B.B.*, 44, p. 109).



**119 Red-backed Shrike**

- E Epping Forest, three pairs bred in the Loughton-High Beech area (S.K., H.W.R.).
- H Totteridge, one pair bred (E.R.G.K., E.H.W.).
- M Mill Hill, two pairs nested (E.H.W.). Ruislip-Northwood, six to seven pairs nested (T.L.B., B.P.P., N.H.P.). Staines, two pairs present in the breeding season, young seen on June 24 (P.J.H. *et al.*).
- S With the exception of Chessington and Dulwich Wood, pairs were reported in or near all the localities mentioned in the *L.B.R.* for 1949, p. 16, and were known to have bred in most of them. Nesting was reported also from Banstead Downs (two pairs, H.T.M.W.), Coulsdon (two pairs, H.O.B., D.B.P.) and Epsom Common (four pairs, H.J.H.), and one pair each at Ditton Common (D.P.), Epsom Downs (H.B.), Ewell (S.H.C.), Headley Heath (S.H.C.), Purley (J.M.C.) and Wandsworth Common (H.G.A.). Of a total of 28 pairs recorded in the Surrey part of the Area, 22 pairs were known to have nested.

**120 Waxwing**

- M Finchley, two on Jan. 27 (E.H.W.). Hayes, one from Feb. 24 to Mar. 1 (C.M.J.). Heston, twelve on Apr. 1 and 20 on Apr. 2 and Apr. 7 (W.H.D., A.G., R.S.H., W.C.T.).
- The following Kent and Surrey records have been received from the British Empire Naturalists' Association through their Recorder, Mr. G. A. Hebditch.
- K Beckenham, one on Jan. 5.
- S Ashted, six on Feb. 28 and Mar. 31, and four on Apr. 4. Long Ditton, three on Jan. 30. New Malden, two on Jan. 15.

**121 Spotted Flycatcher**

- M/S Inner London: fledged young seen in Battersea Park, Bloomsbury, Brompton Cemetery, Kensington Gardens, Manchester Square (W.1), Marylebone Road, Ranelagh Gardens (Chelsea), Regent's Park, St. James's Park, Victoria Park and the garden of Lambeth Palace.

**123 Pied Flycatcher**

- E Chingford, one in a garden on Aug. 30 (I.P.). Epping Forest, a cock on Apr. 30 (K.W., T.W.).
- M Southall, a cock on the West Middlesex Golf Course on May 2 (G.A.H.). Bushy Park, two on Sept. 2 (E.M.G.). Hampstead Heath, up to six seen between Aug. 27 and Sept. 18 (M.F.B.B., G.T.), and one on Oct. 29 (J.F.W.B., M.P.); the last date is exceptionally late, but satisfactory details have been received. Inner London: Green Park, one on Aug. 25 and one on Sept. 1 (A.J.Hy., W.G.T.); Kensington Gardens, one on Sept. 8 (C.H.F.P.).
- S Streatham Common, a hen on May 9 (H.G.A.). Woodmansterne, a cock on Apr. 30 (A.J.Hy.). Banstead Heath, one on Sept. 3 (H.B.). Ham Common, one on Sept. 20 (F.R.M.). Lonsdale Road, two on Sept. 5 (S.K.).

**126/127 Goldcrest**

- M Inner suburbs: Acton, one on Apr. 2 (T.G.N.). Inner London: Chelsea, one in Ranelagh Gardens on Apr. 1 and Oct. 28 (P.D.); Green Park, one on Oct. 16 (W.G.T.); Kensington Gardens, party of c. 5 on Oct. 29 and one on Nov. 3 (R.W.H.N., T.S.).
- S Inner suburbs: Dulwich, one in a garden on Jan. 21, 26 and Nov. 19, 20 (R.D.). Inner London: Battersea Park, one on Oct. 25 (J.N.A.R.).

**128 Firecrest**

- S Wimbledon Common, one on Mar. 19 (J.A.; supporting details received).

**135 Wood-Warbler**

- B Black Park, a pair and a single male on June 10/11 (F.H.J., C.A.W.).
- E Again recorded as nesting only from Epping Forest and Warley (C.E.B., S.K., H.W.R., R.B.W.).
- H Cuffley Great Woods, two singing on May 13 (E.R.G.K.). Oxhey Woods, three singing on May 21 (W.D.M.).
- M Nesting reported from Harrow Weald and Stanmore Commons (several pairs, E.H.W., W.H.D.W.). Ruislip, two pairs in the breeding season (B.P.P.). Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one on May 11 and May 13 (E.M.C.E.).
- K Hayes and Keston Commons, five to six pairs bred (W.A.B., G.E.M.).
- S Banstead Heath and Burgh Heath, seven pairs in the breeding season (H.B.). Esher Common, one to two pairs bred (K.P.K.). Gatton Park, two pairs in the breeding season (H.B.). Titsey, Limpsfield and Westerham, seven singing males on June 25 (J.S.S.B.). Inner suburbs: Dulwich, a singing male in the breeding season (J.S.S.B., R.D.); Streatham Common, one on May 9 and June 26 (H.G.A.).

**145 Grasshopper-Warbler**

- H Moor Park, one on May 28 (P.R.K.).
- M Northolt, one on May 4 in Gutteridge Wood (P.R.K.). Ruislip, one on Apr. 29 (T.L.B.).
- S Bookham Common, a singing male, April to July (J.S.S.B., S.H.C., R.W.H.N., B.A.R.). Epsom and Ashted Commons, two to three singing males throughout the breeding season, but sustained watching failed to reveal evidence of mates or nesting (H.J.H.).

**149 Reed-Warbler**

- E Navestock Lake, several singing on June 3 (R.B.W.).
- H Moor Mill, two singing males, April to July (E.H.W.). West Hyde, six pairs in May (F.H.J.).
- M Nested at Feltham gravel pits (B.A.R.), Poyle (R.S.H.) and Staines Moor (P.J.H.).

- K The large nesting colony at Abbey Wood Marshes reported in the *L.B.R.* for 1949, p. 18, continued in 1950 and a further 50-60 pairs nested on the Thames marshes from Dartford to Northfleet (J.F.B., W.I.B., K.H.P.). Ruxley G.P., one-two pairs nested (J.F.B., F.J.H.).
- S Barn Elms, one pair again bred in the small gravel pit (E.W.F., A.G.G.T.). Epsom S.F., six pairs in the breeding season (H.B.). Ham G.P., one to two pairs nested (F.R.M.). Richmond Park, one pair bred (P.C., R.W.HN.).

### 153 Sedge-Warbler

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one on May 1 (E.MCE.).

### 161 Garden-Warbler

M/S Inner London: Battersea Park, one on Apr. 27 and May 13 (J.N.A.R.). Hyde Park, one on May 12 and May 19 (E.MCE.).

### 162 Blackcap

M Inner London: St. James's Park, one seen on May 4 and one heard singing on May 8 (A.J.HY., W.G.T.); St. John's Wood, one singing strongly in overgrown garden on June 27 and July 4 (S.C., W.G.T.).

S Inner London, Battersea Park, one singing between Apr. 28 and June 26, and one on Sept. 17 (E.M.N., J.N.A.R., W.G.T.). Inner suburbs: Dulwich Wood, two males sang through the breeding season (J.S.S.B.); Streatham, in a wood, S.E. of the Common, a singing male and a juvenile in July; a male seen on Wandsworth Common on May 31 (H.G.A.).

### 163 Whitethroat

M/S Inner London, seen on passage in Battersea Park, Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, Regent's Park, in the garden of Ladbroke Square and on City bombed sites (many observers).

### 164 Lesser Whitethroat

S Inner suburbs: Streatham Common, a pair and three young on July 7, 12, 20; Wandsworth Common, two heard on May 4 (H.G.A.).

### 178 Redwing

S An adult incapable of flight was picked up in woodland on Wimbledon Common on August 19. It had an old injury under the wing and was very thin. Efforts to restore it to health, lasting over several weeks, were unsuccessful (D.C., D.G., E.H.H.).

### 186/7 Wheatear

Passage through the Area lasted from March 18 to May 21 in the spring, and from July 16 to October 28 in the autumn. Some of the birds, from their bright colouration and tendency to perch high, were suspected of being of the Greenland form.

M/S Inner London: Battersea Park, one on Apr. 29 and May 1 (E.M.N.); Cripplegate, noted on several occasions on spring and autumn passage (A.W.B., N.J.P.W. *et al.*).

**197 Whinchat**

- E Bred at Fairlop (M.R.C.) and Sewardstone (three pairs, P.F.C.R.).  
 H Moor Mill, one pair bred (E.H.W.).  
 M Near Harefield, one pair bred (H.F.G., C.A.W.). Hendon and Mill Hill, two pairs bred (E.H.W.). Perry Oaks S.F., one to two pairs bred (P.J.H., W.N.M., C.A.W. *et al.*). Staines Moor, of three pairs present in adjacent territories at least one pair bred (E.L.C., E.H.W. *et al.*). Inner London: City bombed sites, one to three noted May 3-10 and on Aug. 30 and Sept. 4 (A.W.B., A.G., F.J.H. *et al.*); Hyde Park, a pair on May 9 (E.M.CE.).  
 K Bred on Abbey Wood Marshes (three pairs, J.S.S.B., J.F.B.) and on Stone Marshes (three pairs, K.H.P. *et al.*).

**198 Stonechat**

- All records received are given (*cf. L.B.R.*, 1949, pp. 19-20, and 1948, p. 14). As in 1949, a pair bred at Northolt and a pair probably bred on the Thames marshes in Kent. Since the cold spell of early 1947 these with Brockley Hill and Walton Heath are the only nesting localities known in the Area. Non-breeding records are more numerous in 1950 than in any of the years since the cold spell.
- E Enfield, a pair on July 27 (J.L.P.). Rainham, two on Oct. 30 (R.S. in E.B.W.P.S., p. 9). Walthamstow Res., a male on Nov. 4 (S.K.).  
 H Maple Cross, a male on Feb. 12 (H.F.G.). Shenley, a male on Oct. 29 (E.H.W.). Watford S.F., up to eight on many dates between Jan. 1 and Mar. 11 (seven observers); a male on Nov. 12 (P.R.K.) and a female on Dec. 23 (N.H.P.).  
 M Brent Res., one to two from Jan. 1 until Mar. 27 (T.B., J.E.R. *et al.*); one on Sept. 3, Oct. 28 and Dec. 30 (A.G., E.H.W.). Bushy Park, a male on Mar. 5 (E.M.G., E.W.P.) and a male during November (J.V.P.L.). Edmonton, two males and two females by the River Lea on May 9 (T.W.). Hampstead Heath, an immature on Sept. 19 (E.H.W.) and a male on Oct. 14 (M.F.B.B.). Near Harefield, a pair on Feb. 12 (H.F.G.). Northolt, one pair nested three times (eggs and young seen, J.B.Y.). Ponders End, a pair on Oct. 22 (J.L.P.). Staines-Harlington area, frequently noted, not more than two together, in Jan., Apr., Oct., Nov., Dec. (many observers). Wormwood Scrubs, one on Oct. 22 (W.G.T.).  
 K Recorded from most of the marshes between Plumstead and Swanscombe, chiefly Oct.-Dec. and not more than four birds together; probably bred on Plumstead Marshes (seven observers).  
 S Banstead Heath, a male on Feb. 19 (H.B.). Beddington S.F., up to three, Oct. 4-Dec. 31 (five observers). Epsom Downs, a male on Sept. 20 (H.B.). Epsom S.F., a female on Jan. 24, and one to three in December (H.B., H.T.M.W.). Fetcham, a male on Dec. 31 (G.B.). Ham G.P., one to two, Oct.-Dec. (F.R.M., J.M.R.). Littleworth Common, a male on Oct. 9 (D.P.). Molesey S.F., a female on Dec. 3 (D.P.). Putney Vale, a male on Oct. 27 (R.W.HN.). Richmond Park, a pair on Oct. 29 and one on Dec. 4 (P.C., E.S.). Riddlesdown, one

on Dec. 28 (A.J.H.). Streatham Common, one on Feb. 23 (H.G.A.). Walton G.P., one to two in Jan., Oct. and Dec. (A.G.H., D.P.).

### 201 Redstart

- E Epping Forest remains the stronghold of the species in the county; singing males were recorded also at Warley and in Hainault Forest (C.E.B., K.D.G.M., R.B.W. *et al.*). One pair nested in Weald Park (G.A.P. in E.B.W.P.S., p. 27).
- H Cuffley Great Woods, three singing males in May and June, and one nest found (E.R.G.K., B.L.S.).
- M Bushy Park, one pair bred (E.M.G., E.W.P.). Stanmore, three pairs bred (H.G.S., E.H.W., W.H.D.W.).
- M/S Inner London: Battersea Park, one on Apr. 9 and one on Apr. 15, two on Apr. 27 (J.N.A.R.); Kennington Road, two in a garden on May 9 (K.B.); Kensington Gardens, one on Apr. 30 and May 1 (E.M.C.E., C.H.F.P.).
- K Lullingstone Park, two pairs feeding young on June 21 (J.S.S.B.). Petts Wood, one pair probably bred (J.S.S.B., G.B.). St. Paul's Cray Common, a pair feeding young unable to fly on July 6 (J.A.).
- S Nested in Ashted Woods (R.H., A.W.W.) and on Limpsfield Chart (J.S.S.B.). Richmond Park, six nests found, eight to ten pairs probably bred (P.C.).

### 202 Black Redstart

See special note on pp. 43-45.

### 203 Nightingale

Many records of breeding pairs and singing males have been received from the rural or semi-rural fringe; for example, the districts around Romford, Epping, Enfield, Cuffley, Mill Hill, Bricketwood, Northwood, Claygate, Leatherhead, Coulsdon, Godstone, Shoreham and Dartford. Those nearest to the centre of London are as follow:

- M Inner London, Regent's Park, one singing near Winfield House on Apr. 26 (K.P.).
- S Wandsworth Common, one on June 9 (H.G.A.). Wimbledon Common, one to two pairs nested (P.C., J.M.R.). Wimbledon Park, one singing on May 24 (K.V.E.).

### 220 Swallow

S Godstone, one on Dec. 4, 1949 (K. R. Chandler in *B.B.*, 44, p. 87).

### 227 Nightjar

- B Noted on several occasions near Black Park in the breeding season (H.J.E.).
- E Present in the breeding season, as usual, in Epping Forest (C.E.B., H.W.R.).
- H Present throughout the breeding season on or near Chorleywood Common (H.J.E.).

M Stanmore, one "churring" on June 6 (E.H.W.).

K Hayes Common, of four pairs present one pair was known to have bred successfully (A.W.B., J.S.S.B., G.E.M.).

S Headley Heath, two to three "churring" on June 16 (A.E.E.). Ham Common and Richmond Park, probably three pairs, May-July; the only nest reported was destroyed by a bulldozer (P.C., R.W.H.N., B.A.M., A.K.S.). Limpsfield Chart, apparently only three to four pairs, compared with 10-15 "singing" males in 1949 (J.S.S.B.).

### 232 Hoopoe

For a report on Hoopoes in the British Isles in 1950 *vide B.B.*, 44, pp. 204, 205.

E North Weald, one in a garden on Sept. 19 (A.C.D. in E.B.W.P.S., p. 10).

M *Corrigendum*: the bird reported in the *L.B.R.*, 1947, p. 13, was seen at Stain Hill Res. (*cf. L.B.R.*, 1949, p. 21).

S Sanderstead, one in gardens on Sept. 18 (A.J.H.; satisfactory details received).

### 234 Kingfisher

M Inner London, St. James's Park, one on Mar. 23 (H.H.).

### 235 Green Woodpecker

M Inner London: Holland Park, one heard on July 4 (T.S.); Kensington Gardens, one in Jan., May, Sept. and Nov. (H., H.O.J., O.L.M.).

### 237 Great Spotted Woodpecker

M Inner London: Kensington Gardens, at least one pair bred (H.O.J., C.H.F.P.); St. John's Wood, a hen with a juvenile visited a garden bird table in June and July, the young bird continuing to come for food until at least Aug. 29 (H.M.R.K.).

### 238 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one in Oct., Nov. and Dec. (C.H.H., R.W.H.N., C.H.F.P.).

### 239 Wryneck

E Hainault Forest, one on Apr. 7 (D.Gt. in E.B.W.P.S., p. 10).

H Park Street, one pair bred in a secluded orchard (W.D.M., R.A.S.M., M.R.). Near Bricketwood, a male on July 13 (E.H.W.).

M Stanmore, a male at Bentley Priory on Apr. 21 apparently did not stay (E.H.W.).

K Longfield, a pair and one other on Apr. 16 (J.S.S.B.).

S Pairs recorded in the breeding season at Chipstead (L.I.C.), Leatherhead (S.H.C., J.E.S.D.), Tadworth and Banstead Heath (four pairs, H.B.). Purley, one heard on May 14 and July 5 (H.B., J.M.C.). One at Belmont in May (P.W.E.C.) and one at South Croydon in April (F.M.F.) were presumably passing through.

**240 Little Owl**

M Inner London: Cripplegate, one in Jan. and Dec. (D.V.F., E.H.W.); Kensington, one sitting in snow on roof of building near Kensington Court on Dec. 15 (G.C.L.); Kensington Gardens, one heard on July 21 (H.O.J.); Marylebone Station, one on Jan. 28 (H.W.N.).

S Inner suburbs, a pair bred in Dulwich Wood (J.S.S.B.; cf. *L.B.R.*, 1947, p. 13).

**250 Long-eared Owl**

S Esher Common, one seen perched on a branch of a birch tree c. 30 feet up on May 13; the ear-tufts were plainly visible (H.J.H.).

**251 Short-eared Owl**

H Watford S.F., one on Nov. 4 (P.R.K.).

K Dartford Marshes, two on Dec. 3 and one on Dec. 9 (K.H.P.).

S Beddington S.F. and Mitcham Common, one to three between Nov. 24 and the end of the year (C.J.O.H., B.S.M., A.G.G.T. *et al.*). Bookham Common, one on Nov. 12 (G.B.). Barn Elms Res. and Park, one on Feb. 5 and Feb. 11 (D.E.P.).

**254 Barn-Owl**

As usual, there are sight records from many parts of the London Area at all seasons, but the only suggestions of breeding in 1950 are from three Kent localities.

M Inner London: Hyde Park Corner, one seen flying into the Green Park on May 11 (T.G.N.). This may have been the bird that was found stunned in the grounds of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, on May 24 and reported in the *Evening Standard*, May 25.

K Pairs probably bred at Elmers End Cemetery, Lullingstone and Westerham (J.S.S.B., G.E.M.).

**259 Peregrine Falcon**

M Staines Reservoirs and Moor, one from the beginning of the year until March 18 (many observers; cf. *L.B.R.*, 1949, p. 22); one was seen on Oct. 22, Oct. 29 and Dec. 10 (P.J.H., C.C.R., C.A.W.). Perry Oaks S.F., one on Apr. 15 (P.J.H.) and one on Oct. 13 (H.A.B.). Inner London, a tiercel over Knightsbridge on Oct. 12 (J.S.S.B.).

K Crayford, one on Mar. 21 (W.I.B.). Dartford Marshes, a male and a female, one with a jess hanging from the leg, on Apr. 30 (J.S.S.B., A.H.B.). Southfleet, one on Apr. 16 (J.S.S.B.). In the autumn single birds were seen on Dartford Marshes on Oct. 12 (W.I.B.), and Swanscombe Marshes on Oct. 24/25 and Nov. 4 (J.F.B., K.H.P.).

S Richmond Park, one seen flying over on Dec. 22 by the gamekeeper, Mr. Wonham (per R.W.HN.).

**261 Hobby**

H Colney Street, one on Sept. 2 (E.H.W.).

M Perry Oaks S.F., Staines Reservoirs and Moor, one to two between July 30 and Sept. 24 (many observers). At another locality one was seen on several dates between June 14 and Aug. 27 (T.L.B., B.P.P., N.H.P.; satisfactory details received).

**262 Merlin**

- H Colney Street, a male and a female together at Old Parkbury on Jan. 3 (E.H.W.). Watford S.F., a male on Nov. 4 (P.R.K.).  
S Epsom S.F., one on Oct. 26 (H.B.).

**263 Kestrel**

- S Richmond Park, five pairs nested and 20 young flew (R.W.H.N.; cf. *L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 16, and 1949, p. 22). One of the young ringed by B.A.M. was killed by a train at Twyford, Bucks. (48 m. N.W.) on 8.ix.50.

**268/9 Buzzard**

- E Sewardstonebury, one on Oct. 7 (A.E.J.).  
M Northwood, two watched for fifteen minutes wheeling and drifting eastwards on June 10 (G.K.M.C.C.). Inner London, one in flight at c. 150 feet over Ranelagh Gardens, Chelsea, Feb. 26 (P.D., P.S.S.).  
Dartford Marshes, one soaring at a height towards the Essex coast on Apr. 30 (J.S.S.B., A.H.B., J.F.B.).

**273 Hen-Harrier**

- K Swanscombe Marshes, a female or immature from Oct. 22 to Oct. 26 (W.I.B., K.H.P.). Dartford Marshes, a similar bird on Dec. 3 (K.H.P.).

**289 Common Heron**

- E Little Parndon, 13-14 occupied nests (D.A.T.M.). Walthamstow Res., 67 nests occupied on Apr. 22 (E.R.P., H.W.R.). Wanstead Park, four pairs nested (G.W.).  
M Kempton Park, 81 occupied nests (E.W.P.). Osterley Park, one pair nested and reared young (F.R.M.).  
S Gatton Park, eight pairs nested; again none nested at Godstone (H.B.). Richmond Park, 12 occupied nests (R.W.H.N.).

The total for the London Area was therefore 186/187 breeding pairs, compared with 156-159 in 1949. Excluding Little Parndon, Osterley Park and Gatton Park, we have the figure of 164 pairs; this may be inserted in the series of strictly comparable totals for the four largest heronries since 1946 (cf. *L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 17, and 1949, p. 23), as follow: 1946, 134; 1947, 118; 1948, 122; 1949, 146; 1950, 164.

The percentage increase of the breeding population in 1950 over that of the previous year is, taking the full totals, 18%; and taking the totals for the four sample heronries, 12%. Since the six active heronries in 1950 were also the six in occupation and counted in 1949, the figure of 18% may fairly be taken as a measure of the continuing recovery of the London Area herons. This figure differs only slightly from that of 16% for the Thames Drainage Area given by W. B. Alexander in *B.B.*, 44, pp. 123-126, but is considerably higher than the increase of 2% in South-east England (*op. cit.*).



(From Alexander's paper it is seen that, notwithstanding the steady increase in recent years, the heron population generally throughout the country had not yet in 1950 reached the so-called "normal" of the 'thirties. It might be inferred that, the winter of 1950-51 being not particularly severe, a further increase in the number of breeding pairs could be expected. In fact, so far as the London Area is concerned, this has occurred: the 1951 total for all London heronries is 204-206, and the figure for the four major colonies is 182.)

### 304 White-fronted Goose

M Staines Moor, a flock of c. 60 grey geese on flooded banks of the River Colne in the early afternoon of Dec. 20 was seen well enough for dark bars on breast and white foreheads to be visible on some of the birds before they flew off to the south (D.B.P.). [A flock of c. 70 unidentified geese was reported by the gamekeeper, Mr. H. M. Wonham (per R.W.HN.) flying westwards over Richmond Park (Surrey) on the morning of the same day, Dec. 20, followed by about ten in the afternoon.] A party of 12 Whitefronts was seen on and about Staines Moor on Dec. 25, 26, 27, (A.G., R.W.HN., N.H.P., C.A.W.).

### 307 Pink-footed Goose

H [Colney Street, a party of nine grey geese in flight at sunset on Nov. 5 were considered by the observer to have been probably Pink-footed Geese (E.H.W.).]

M Staines Moor, one seen daily between Dec. 24 and Dec. 27 sometimes accompanied the party of 12 White-fronts recorded above (A.G., R.S.H., R.W.HN., N.H.P., A.G.G.T., C.A.W.). This is the first record for the London Area since 1941.

### [311 Barnacle-Goose

H Hamper Mill, one from Feb. 5 to Mar. 26 (T.L.B., G.K.MCC., N.H.P., *et al.*). The identity of this bird was not in doubt, but square brackets are used in view of the possibility of its having been one of the ten full-winged Barnacle Geese lost from Major Pam's collection at Broxbourne, Herts., in the winter of 1949-50.]

### 312/3 Brent Goose

H Hamper Mill, of five flying south on Dec 23 three broke away and circled close enough to observer for satisfactory details to be obtained (N.H.P.). To the Committee's enquiry, the Avicultural Society replied that no losses of Brents from captivity had been reported.

K Swanscombe Marshes, seven on Oct. 26 (K.H.P.) and 14 on Nov. 4 (J.F.B.).

**315 Sheld-Duck**

M Brent Res., two on Jan. 1 (S.K., J.F.R.). Perry Oaks S.F., Staines Reservoirs and Moor, one on Jan. 8, up to five on 14 dates between Mar. 26 and May 17, one on Oct. 8 and two on Dec. 10 (many observers).

K Stone Marshes, up to ten, Jan.-May (J.F.B., G.M.).

T Barn Elms Res., three on Dec. 10 (H.C.H.).

**[316 Ruddy Sheld-duck**

The following record is contained within square brackets as the birds may have been escapes. An interesting note on this subject is published in *B.B.*, 44, p. 327.

M Brent Res., two flew over northwards on Apr. 10 (T.B., A.G.).]

**318 Gadwall**

T Barn Elms Res., up to c. 25, Jan.-May and Oct.-Dec. (many observers); a nest with seven eggs was found on June 2 (A.W.W.).

**319 Teal**

Only breeding season records are given :

E Chingford district, a pair in the Lea valley on May 14 (S.K.).

M Poyle gravel pits, a male and a female flushed on June 4 (C.A.W.). At Perry Oaks S.F. an adult male was noted on June 4 and July 17, but there was no evidence of nesting (C.A.W.).

**322 Garganey**

E Rainham, Berwick Pond, a duck on May 28, and two adults and seven young able to fly seen between Aug. 23 and Aug. 29; Sewardstone G.P., a drake on Aug. 17 (M.J.A.).

H Aldenham Res., a drake on Aug. 31 (E.H.W.).

M A pair were seen on Staines Res. on Mar. 26 and at Staines Moor and Poyle gravel pits on Apr. 19, Apr. 20 and May 16; a single drake was noted in this district on Apr. 15, Apr. 16, May 20, and an unaccompanied duck on May 6 (six observers). It is impossible to say whether all these records refer to the same two birds, but the continued presence of Garganey (*cf. L.B.R.*, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949) in this area at this season is most interesting. There were three at Perry Oaks S.F. on Aug. 14 (B.P.P., N.H.P.).

**323 Wigeon**

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, a drake on the Round Pond on Nov. 17 (R.W.H.N.); St. James's Park, an immature male which appeared in the autumn of 1949 remained throughout 1950 with the pinioned "park" birds (T.L.B., A.J.HY., W.G.T. *et al.*.)

**325 Pintail**

M Perry Oaks S.F., a drake on Jan. 15 (P.J.H.). Staines Res., one to two, Jan.-Mar., three on Oct. 22 and nine on Dec. 20 (eight observers).

S Island Barn Res., a drake on Jan. 15 and Feb. 19 (D.P.).

T Barn Elms Res., a pair, and sometimes a drake and two ducks, recorded frequently between Jan. 7 and Mar. 5 (many observers). River Thames at Chiswick Eyot, a drake and three ducks on Nov. 7 (R.W.Hn.).

**326 Shoveler**

M Perry Oaks S.F., up to four in May but apparently did not breed (C.A.W.; cf. *L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 20, and 1949, p. 24). Poyle G.P., a drake on May 9 and a pair on Apr. 19 and May 17 (R.S.H., W.H.D.W.). Staines, up to six pairs present on King George VI Res. in the breeding season, and a pair seen with eight downy young on June 18 (W.N.M., C.A.W.; this is the third breeding record for the county). Inner London, Kensington Gardens, a drake on the Long Water on May 19 (J.H.F.M.).

**[327 Red-crested Pochard**

M Pinioned birds were introduced into Regent's Park and St. James's Park early in 1950; three pairs bred and the young were left free-winged; Kensington Gardens, a drake on the Round Pond on Sept. 10 (W.G.T.).

T Barn Elms, a drake with Pochard and Tufted Ducks on Dec. 30 and Dec. 31 (J.B., M.B., H.C.H., J.C.L., A.G.G.T.).]

**328 Pochard**

M One ringed in St. James's Park on 3.ii.49 by T.L.B. was recovered there on 26.x.49, 28.iv.50 and 18.xi.50; another ringed on 22.ii.42 by E.O.H. was re-caught there, after eight years, also on 28.iv.50.

K Ruxley G.P., a drake from Apr. 16 to the end of June, but no female was seen (J.S.S.B., J.F.B., F.J.H.). Stone Marshes, a drake on seven dates between Apr. 23 and Aug. 15 (J.F.B., K.H.P., H.M.P.; cf. *L.B.R.*, 1949, p. 25, and 1947, p. 17).

**330 Tufted Duck**

E Walthamstow Res., four broods of young seen in July and Aug. (W.C.D., A.V.P.).

M Finsbury Park lake, a duck with three small young on July 16 (C.W.). Stoke Newington, Clissold Park, a pair on June 3, a female with five small young on July 15 and with three larger young on Aug. 27. (J.B.).

The following recoveries of birds ringed by T.L.B. in St. James's Park have been notified:

Ringed 19.iii.49; recovered at mouth of R. Ob. Siberia (66° 30' N., 66° 18' E.) on 2.ix.49.

Ringed 15.iii.47; recovered at Sääminki, Finland (61° 40' N., 29° 25' E.) in May 1950.

S Kew Gardens, a duck with four young on Aug. 19 (J.W.L.). Richmond Park, two broods hatched (P.C.).

T River Thames at Richmond Bridge, a pair with one well-grown young on Aug. 13 (B.A.R.). Barn Elms Res., one pair bred (J.MCH., D.E.P.).

### 331 Scaup-Duck

M King George VI Res., a duck on Sept. 28 (J.Fld.). Inner London, records of a drake and a duck in St. James's Park and on the Round Pond in Kensington Gardens probably refer to the same birds; the drake was seen between Mar. 13 and Apr. 24 and the duck between Feb. 3 and Apr. 24 (many observers).

K Stone Marshes, a drake on Dec. 10 (J.F.B.).

T Barn Elms Res. and Lonsdale Road Res., one to two drakes between Feb. 4 and Apr. 4, and a duck on Feb. 18 and Feb. 25 (many observers); a duck on Dec. 31 (H.C.H.). One recovered dead at Lonsdale Road Res. on Mar. 5 by c.o. had been ringed when a juvenile on 6.viii.47 at Lake Myvatn, Iceland.

### 332 Goldeneye

M Inner London, Kensington Gardens, an adult drake on the Round Pond on Mar. 15 (K.).

### 339 Common Scoter

M King George VI Res., a drake and a duck on Aug. 13 (W.N.M., C.A.W.). Staines Res., a party of 17, including one adult drake, on Dec. 9 (F.H.J., B.P.P., C.A.W.).

### 342 Goosander

M Maxima 42 at Staines Res. on Jan. 15 (H.P.M., W.N.M., C.A.W.) and 47 at Queen Mary Res. on Feb. 19 (R.DAC., P.A.D.H.).

K Stone Marshes, three on the river on Dec. 26 (K.H.P.).

S Maximum 54 at Walton Res. on Mar. 4 (E.W.F.).

T Barn Elms Res., max. seven on Feb. 8 (E.W.F.).

### 343 Red-breasted Merganser

M Staines Res., a drake on Dec. 3 (C.C.R., G.L.S.).

S Inner London, Battersea Park, a drake on Mar. 29 (J.N.A.R.).

### 344 Smew

E Walthamstow Res., maximum 15 on Dec. 30 (K.D.G.M., H.W.R.).

H Aldenham Res., four to five on Feb. 7 and Feb. 11 (B.L.S., E.H.W.). Hamper Mill, one on Jan. 29 (P.R.K., G.K.MCC.).

M Stanmore Common, five on a pond on the north-east side on Mar. 12 (C.C.R.). Recorded by many observers at the various reservoirs, as usual; max. c. 50 at Brent Res. on Feb. 4 and Feb. 21 (A.G., E.H.W.).

K Stone Marshes, up to three in January and February, and again in December (J.F.B., K.H.P., H.M.P.).

S Island Barn Res., six on Feb. 19 (D.P.). Walton G.P. and Res., up to 14, Jan.-Mar. (D.P.). Ham G.P. two on Nov. 27 (F.R.M.).

T Barn Elms and Lonsdale Road Res., mix. c. 90 on Dec. 31 (T.H.L.M., A.G.G.T. *et al.*).

**346/7 Cormorant**

- E Hainault Forest, an immature on the lake on Nov. 4 (D.G.T.). Walthamstow Res., two on Nov. 12 (W.C.D., E.T.N.). West Thurrock, one on the marshes on Apr. 9 (M.J.A.).
- H Rickmansworth, an immature on Stocker's Lake on Feb. 14 (W.H.D.W.).
- M Brent Res., one on June 5 (E.H.W.) and one seen flying over on Oct. 8 (A.G.). Ruislip Res., two on Sept. 19-20 (per T.L.B.). Reported from the Thames valley reservoirs, as usual, in all months except May and August, usually in ones and twos and parties up to six. Flocks were seen flying over the reservoirs at Staines on three dates in September, heading S. or S.E., as follow: two parties, of 15 and three, on Sept. 16 (A.G., W.N.M.); 20 on Sept. 17 (R.W.H.N.); 20 on Sept. 19 (R.C.H.). Of five seen at Queen Mary Res. on Mar. 19 several were "hoary-headed" and one was so much lighter than the rest that it resembled the Southern form (*P. c. sinensis*). The head and neck were practically white (less pure than white thigh patch) down to curve on to back when seen swimming side view, with a horse-shoe of black through eye curving round over ear coverts and turning towards throat. Centre of crown and nape dark, giving maned effect (P.A.D.H.). Inner London, St. James's Park, one wild bird with the three pinioned Cormorants on Feb. 2 (T.L.B., J.M.R.), and one flying over on Dec. 20 (A.J.Hy., W.G.T.).
- K Stone Marshes, one on Jan. 1 and Oct. 22 (G.E.M., H.M.P.).
- S Richmond Park, an immature on the Pen Ponds on Nov. 26 (R.W.H.N.). Island Barn Res. and Walton Res., up to four in Jan. and Nov-Dec. (D.P., W.G.T.).
- T Barn Elms Res. and Thames at Chiswick Eyot and Syon Reach, one to three, Jan.-Apr. and Sept.-Dec.

**349 Gannet**

- M King George VI Res. and Staines Res., an immature in flight on June 18 (G.S.) and one in flight with Great Black-headed Gulls on Sept. 13 (E.H.W.).

**350 Storm-Petrel**

- M Staines Res., one on Nov. 11 was seen at rest and flying (E.E.G., C.A.WR.). This is the first specific record for the London Area during the present century. It is well documented by both observers and only the following more significant extracts from their notes are quoted:—E.E.G.: Overall plumage sooty brown; blunt, rounded tail and hanging legs; the size was about that of a Common Sandpiper and the flight very similar. C.A.WR.: In flight the primaries and tail were noticeably darker than the rest of the plumage; wings long and narrow, sandpiper-like when flying; when at close quarters several of the secondary feathers were seen to have light edgings; several times when on the water it fanned out its tail and it was quite distinctly square; white patch above tail; bill short, nostril protuberances made the bill heavy-looking on such a small bird.

**370 Great Crested Grebe**

For a report on the annual London Area census and a summary of the results of the last five years, see pp. 46-48; for a report on the results from 21 counties, see *B.B.*, 44, pp. 361-369.

**371 Red-necked Grebe**

E Lea valley reservoirs, two on Jan. 21, two on Oct. 8, one on Oct. 22 (W.C.D., H.W.R.).

M Staines Res., two on Jan. 15 (D.I.M.W.). Inner London, Kensington Gardens, an oiled bird on the Long Water between Feb. 6 and 14 (E.MCE., J.MCH., G.C.L., C.H.F.P., B.A.R.).

**373 Slavonian Grebe**

E Walthamstow Res., one on Mar. 11 (W.C.D.).

M Brent Res., one on Nov. 30 (E.H.W.). Staines Res., one in summer plumage on Apr. 4, 6 (I.C.T.N., D.I.M.W.). Inner London, Hyde Park, one in summer plumage on the Serpentine on Apr. 27 (R.W.HN., H., G.C.L.).

T Barn Elms Res., one on Jan. 29 and Feb. 4 (five observers).

**374 Black-necked Grebe**

E Walthamstow Res., two on July 16 (H.W.R.).

M Brent Res., one on Oct. 7 (J.F.). Kempton Park Res., one on Oct. 22 (A.W.W.). Staines reservoirs, regularly seen (66 dates) on passage and in winter, but not recorded between May 1 and July 26. Maxima for each month are as follow: Jan., five; Feb., two; Mar. five; Apr., two; May 1, two; July 26, one; Aug., two; Sept., seven; Oct., five; Nov., seven; Dec., seven.

S Island Barn Res., one on Feb. 19 (D.P.).

**375 Little Grebe**

M/S Autumn flocking between August and Nov. was again very noticeable at the Brent Res. (*cf. L.B.R.*, 1949, p. 27); numbers rose to c. 60 in late September and for most of October (A.G., E.C.O., *et al.*). Flocks were also reported on two of the Thames valley gravel pits: 25 at Feltham on Aug. 13 (B.A.R.) and up to 23 at Walton in August and September (D.P.).

**376 Great Northern Diver**

M Brent Res., the bird reported in November and December 1949 (*L.B.R.*, 1949, p. 27) was seen again, Jan. 1-3 (six observers); it was not visibly oiled and on Jan. 1 was seen in flight. There are no subsequent January records, but one was recorded there on Feb. 5 by H.M.R.K., who is familiar with the species.

**379 Red-throated Diver**

E Walthamstow Res., one on Jan. 28 (W.C.D.) and one regularly from Mar. 1-15 (S.A., V.H.B., W.C.D., F.H.J., E.T.N.).

K Stone Marshes, one from Jan. 22 to Apr. 23, and another found shot on Jan. 23 (J.B., W.I.B., J.F.B., K.H.P., H.M.P.).

T Barn Elms Res., one on Jan. 21 (M.C., A.G.G.T., C.A.W.).

**380 Wood-Pigeon**

M Inner London, three pairs nested on buildings: Tothill Street, Westminster (G.T., W.G.T.), Strand (S.C.), and the G.P.O. Building, King Edward St. (E.P.).

**383 Turtle-Dove**

M Inner London, St. James's Park, one on Sept. 25 (A.J.Hy.).

S Epsom S.F., 25-30 on Sept. 9 but only two on Sept. 16 (D.P.; cf. *L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 23).

*Waders.* A further report by R. A. Hinde on the inland migration of waders (and terns) is given in *B.B.*, 44, pp. 329-346. It contains 1949 and 1950 records for a number of regions, including the London Area.

**387 Black-tailed Godwit**

M Staines Moor and King George VI Res., one to two (one in summer plumage) on Apr. 30, May 1 and May 24 (W.N.M., D.I.M.W., E.H.W., C.A.W.). Perry Oaks S.F., one on July 27 (J.Fld.) and one (not the same) on Aug. 10 and Aug. 13 (G.S., C.A.W. *et al.*); none recorded in September but one seen regularly by many observers between Oct. 7 and early December, when it was found shot.

K Dartford and Stone Marshes, one on Aug. 23 (H.M.P.) and two on Dec. 16 (W.I.B.).

S Molesey S.F., one on Aug. 27 (D.P.).

**388 Common Curlew**

Wintering birds, either singly or in parties up to five, were seen in six localities in January and December. Autumn passage was noted between June 27 and Oct. 24, but mainly in the last week of July and during all of August; max. eight at Staines Moor on Aug. 21. Only four birds were recorded on spring passage.

**389 Whimbrel**

E Chingford, four in flight, calling, on May 7 (A.E.J.). Upminster, one flying over on Apr. 30 (M.J.A.).

M Perry Oaks S.F., one on May 6 and 7 (E.L.C., D.V.F.).

S Richmond Park, one at the Pen Ponds on Apr. 14 (B.A.M.).

**393 Woodcock**

H Cuffley Great Wood, one on Oct. 7 (B.L.S.). Old Parkbury, single birds on June 10, Sept. 2 and Dec. 26 (E.H.W.).

M Bushy Park, "single birds on a few occasions during the winter" (R.M. per E.M.G.). Hampstead, one on the fringe of Ken Wood on Mar. 12 (E.N.H.). Ruislip, one on Mar. 12 and Nov. 26 (G.K.MCC., B.P.P.). Inner London, one picked up injured in St. Charles' Square, W.10, on Mar. 12, was taken to the Zoo (A.J.Hy., A.W.M., *et al.*).

- K Orpington, one on Jan. 29, Oct. 22, Dec. 26 (A.H.B.).  
 S Bookham Common, one on Feb. 12, one "roding" at dusk and dawn, May 20-21, and one on Dec. 10 (G.B., R.W.H.N., B.A.R.). Epsom and Ashted Commons, "woodcock seen roding at dusk on numerous occasions throughout late April and May" (H.J.H.). Headley Heath, one on Mar. 3 (J.A.). Littleworth Common, one on Jan. 25 (D.P.). Richmond Park, single birds on Jan. 24, Dec. 16 and Dec. 30 (P.C., R.W.H.N.). Sanderstead Plantation, one on Dec. 12 (A.J.H.). Walton Heath, one on Mar. 19 (C.H.). Wimbledon Common, one on Apr. 23 (E.S., P.S.). Woodmansterne, one on Mar. 4 (A.J.Hy.).

### 398 Jack Snipe

- H Colney Street, Moor Mill, single birds in January, on Feb. 1 and Dec. 3; not seen in intervening months, but a large part of the marsh was under 12-18 inches of water for most of the year (W.D.M., E.H.W., W.H.D.W.; cf. *L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 24, and 1949, p. 28). Watford S.F., three on Jan. 29 (G.K.MCC.) and up to five in December (P.R.K., B.P.P., N.H.P.).  
 M Brent Res., two on Dec. 16 (R.E.J.). Near Poyle, one on Jan. 29 and one on Feb. 5 (W.N.M., B.A.R.).  
 K Elmers End S.F., one to two in November and December (G.E.M.). Ruxley G.P., one on Jan. 29 and two on Dec. 17 (F.J.H.). Thames marshes near Dartford, single birds, Nov.-Dec. (W.I.B., J.F.B., K.H.P.). Westerham, one on Nov. 18 (G.E.M.).  
 S Beddington S.F., one on Jan. 29 and up to four, Oct.-Dec. (R.H.G., A.J.H., B.S.M., A.G.G.T.). Epsom S.F., one on Dec. 31 (A.W.W.). Richmond Park, one on Dec. 16 (R.W.H.N.).

### 400 Grey Phalarope

- M Brent Res., two from Sept. 8-14; King George VI Res., one from Sept. 18-24 (26 observers). A considerable number of Grey Phalaropes occurred in England, Ireland and Wales in the autumn of 1950 and are recorded in *B.B.*, 44, pp. 247-250.

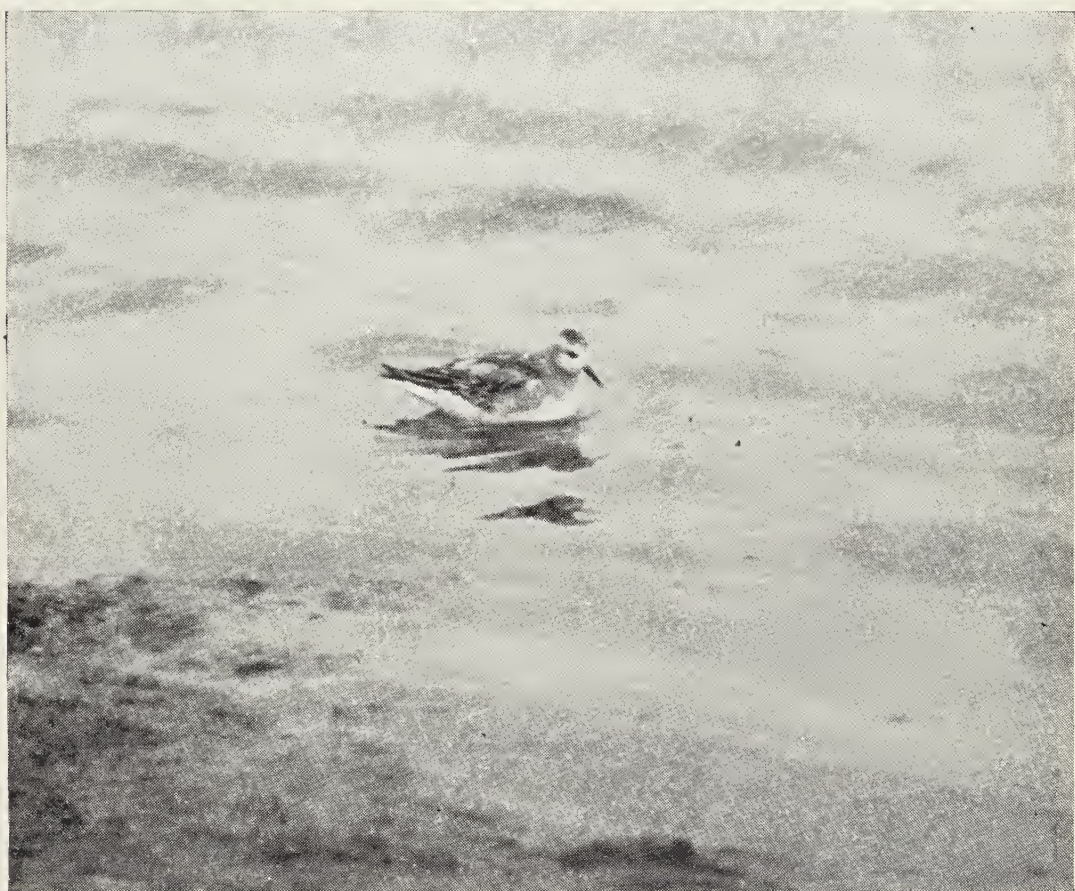
### 402 Turnstone

- M Perry Oaks S.F., one between May 14 and May 21, and one to two on seven dates between July 27 and Sept. 17 (many observers). Inner London, Chelsea, a lame bird on a bombed site near the Thames on Jan. 28 (H.G., R.G.). This is the first record for Inner London.  
 K Dartford and Erith Marshes, three on Sept. 9 and one on Oct. 7 (E.H.G., F.J.H.).  
 T Barn Elms Res., one on Feb. 4-5 (A.G., D.E.P., A.G.G.T. *et al.*). This bird had a limp and was probably the one seen a few days earlier at Chelsea.

### 403 Knot

- E King George V Res., one on Sept. 24 (P.F.C.R.).  
 K Dartford Marshes, one on Oct. 7 (F.J.H.) and one on Dec. 23 (K.H.P.).





GREY PHALAROPES  
Brent Reservoir, September 1950



GREY PIALAROPE  
Brent Reservoir, September 1950  
*Photographs by C. B. Ashby*

**404/5 Dunlin**

- E** King George V Res., two on Nov. 12 (H.W.R.). Sewardstone G.P., six on Aug. 17 (M.J.A.). Walthamstow Res., a flock of 15 flew south on Aug. 13 (W.C.D., E.T.N.).
- H** Aldenham Res., one on Sept. 10 (E.H.W.).
- M** Brent Res., one on May 17 (W.D.M., E.H.W.). Bushy Park, one at Diana Pond on Jan. 14 (R.S.H.). Perry Oaks S.F. and Staines Moor and reservoirs, again an occasional winter record and many records for the passage months Apr.-May and July-October. We have records for 30% of the total days in these spring months, and for 32% of the autumn days. From the regularity with which Dunlin were recorded one can safely assume that they were, as a species, continuously present; but the rate of change of this passage population is difficult to assess. In spring, for example, one to eight were noted all through April and May at Perry Oaks and up to four at Staines, but the only certain indication of the transitory presence of fresh passage migrants was a party of 14 seen at Staines on May 20, when the usual half-dozen were also reported from Perry Oaks. Numbers in autumn were, as usual, considerably higher and show better the comings and goings of birds passing through and pausing to feed and rest. None was noted in the first half of July, but 21 were seen on the 15th and were still present the following day. These were all in breeding plumage. Numbers rose to c. 30 towards the end of the month when, although most were in summer plumage, birds in first autumn or winter dress started to appear. All or nearly all these birds had moved on by early August, only lower numbers (five to nine) being reported during the ensuing fortnight. The second arrival in force evidently occurred in mid-August, thirty-two being found at Perry Oaks on Aug. 14; this time only one was in summer dress. This group may have stayed for a week or so and been reinforced by a few fresh arrivals; for although only 16 were counted on the 16th, there were 34-39 on 19th and 21st, and of these seven now were in summer dress. The records for the rest of August and the first half of September appear conflicting but may represent a state of considerable change, with flocks of birds arriving and leaving; but usually 20-30 were present. Late September and early October saw a reduction to only two or three, but even at this time some observers recorded flocks of twenty or so; though apparently these did not stay long. Stragglers continued all October, and the last were four on Nov. 12. Inner London, Kensington Gardens, one by the Round Pond on May 1 (M.E.K.).
- K** Thames marshes near Dartford, up to nine recorded in August, October and December (J.F.B., F.J.H., K.H.P.).
- S** Beddington S.F., one to two, Aug. 14-17 (B.S.M., H.T.M.W.). Walton district, single birds in January, April and August (P.A.D.H., D.P.).
- T** Barn Elms Res., one to three, May, July and September (A.G.G.T. *et al.*).

**406 Curlew-Sandpiper**

M Perry Oaks S.F., one to three intermittently during August, and larger (though variable) numbers apparently continuously during all of September and until Oct. 14. Eight or more were noted on 12 dates between Sept. 5 and Oct. 4; max. 15-17, Sept. 19-24. These numbers are exceptionally high for the London Area.

K Stone Marshes, one on May 5 (W.I.B.).

**407 Little Stint**

M Perry Oaks S.F., single birds on May 7, July 30 and Aug. 16; up to five seen almost daily in September, 15-17 from Oct. 1-4 and up to four until Oct. 27 (many observers). Such large numbers and continuous presence for five weeks in autumn are unusual in the Area. Staines Res., one on May 9 (E.H.W.).

**411 American Pectoral Sandpiper**

M Perry Oaks S.F., one from Sept. 16-29 (many observers; cf. *B.B.*, 44, p. 251). This is the first record for the London Area.

**413 Baird's Sandpiper**

M Perry Oaks S.F., one from Sept. 17-22 was seen by about 50 observers. For a full account of this remarkable occurrence see *B.B.*, 44, pp. 252-254.

**416 Sanderling**

E Walthamstow Res., one on Oct. 22 (W.C.D., H.W.R.).

M *Spring records*: Perry Oaks S.F., two (one in summer plumage) on May 20 (G.T., C.A.W.); Staines Res. and King George VI Res., a flock of 14, of which several were in summer plumage, occurred on May 14, seven on 16th, one on 17th, and a flock of 16 on May 20 (E.E.G., P.J.H., G.T., C.M.V. *et al.*). These are exceptionally large numbers for the Area. *Autumn records*: Brent Res., one on Sept. 22 (E.H.W.). Perry Oaks S.F., one-two, July 20-21, Aug. 14-19, Sept. 8-17 and Oct. 3 (many observers); Staines Res., one on Aug. 30 (E.H.W.).

**417 Ruff**

H Hamper Mill, two on July 9 (P.R.K.). Old Parkbury, two on Sept. 2 (E.H.W.). Rickmansworth, two at Stocker's Lake on Sept. 29 (A.J.B.).

M Perry Oaks S.F., eight (one male in partial breeding plumage) on Mar. 26 (H.P.M.) and a flock of 14 on Mar. 27-28 (H.A.B., J.Fld.); single birds, Apr. 10-16, May 20-25; two on July 9; two-three between Aug. 8-23 but up to 12, Aug. 26-30 (R.dac., E.E.G., B.P.P. *et al.*); one to nine during all September and until Oct. 9 (many observers). Staines Res., two on Sept. 21 (C.A.W.).

**421 Common Sandpiper**

The pattern of occurrences in the Area during the year closely resembles that described in the *L.B.R.*, 1949, p. 30, and several flocks of up to c. 15 again were noted. Spring passage occurred between Apr. 10 and May 27, and autumn passage between July 1 and Oct. 22. Two to three wintering birds were reported from the Thames marshes in Kent during Jan.-Feb. and Nov.-Dec., and one was seen at Hamper Mill, Herts., on Jan. 14.

- H Old Parkbury G.P., two, apparently a pair, stayed all summer until September (E.H.W.). On June 27 a piercing whistle considered to be an alarm note was repeatedly given by the believed male, which was standing on a small rise in the gravel diggings. A fainter whistle came from an area of rough oats for a time, then ceased. The first bird continued to call and made short flights, returning and again uttering the alarm. The presumed female, now silent, was flushed from the oats, and while unsuccessful search was made for nest or young both birds flew round at c. 20 yards, giving the long whistle as well as the usual flight note. On July 15 no birds were seen but alarm notes were heard from thick vegetation about 100 yards from the previous site (A.G., W.D.M.).

The foregoing suggests the possibility of breeding, which is exceptional in this part of the country.

**423 Wood-Sandpiper**

- H Moor Mill, one on Sept. 4-5 (W.D.M., E.H.W.).  
 M Perry Oaks S.F., two present continuously from Aug. 1 to Sept. 2; three on Aug. 31 and one on Sept. 9 and Sept. 12 (many observers).  
 Staines Moor, two on Aug. 23 (C.H.S.).  
 K Stone Marshes, one on Aug. 29 (W.I.B.).  
 S Molesey S.F., one on Sept. 2 (D.P.).

**424 Green Sandpiper**

The most favoured locality was again Watford S.F. (*cf. L.B.R.*, 1949, p. 31), where birds were seen wintering and on spring and autumn passage; monthly maxima are as follows:—Jan., six; Feb., fourteen; Mar., fourteen; Apr., twelve; Aug., nine; Sept., three; Oct., two; Nov., six; Dec., four.

Spring passage through the London Area occurred until May 26, and was revealed (except for those at Watford) only by single birds at various inland waters. Return passage was much more obvious and was first noticed on July 1, after which ones and twos and parties up to six or seven were recorded regularly throughout the autumn. Wintering birds in Jan.-Feb.-(possibly March) and (Oct.)-Nov.-Dec. were seen at ten widely separated localities both inland and along the Thames marshes.

**432 Greenshank**

- M Brent Res., two on May 15 (E.H.W.). Perry Oaks S.F., Staines Moor and reservoirs, one to two in Apr.-May and Aug.-Sept.  
 K Dartford Marshes, one on Aug. 1 (W.I.B.).  
 S Molesey S.F., one on Aug. 27 and Sept. 2 (D.P.).

**435 Ringed Plover**

- H Aldenham Res., three on Sept. 10 and Sept. 15 (E.H.W.). Moor Mill, one on Apr. 30 (W.H.D.W.). Watford S.F., one on July 25 (E.H.W.).  
 M Brent Res., one on May 6 (A.G.) and one on Nov. 4 (E.H.W.). Heathrow, Perry Oaks S.F., Staines Moor and reservoirs, noted in all months from March to October; maxima: 25-35 almost daily between May 20 and May 28, 45-60 between Aug. 20 and Sept. 10, c. 50 on Oct. 1 and 20 on Oct. 8 (many observers).  
 K Thames marshes, Dartford district, four to five in August and up to 18 in October (W.I.B., F.J.H., K.H.P., H.M.P.).  
 S Beddington S.F., one, Dec. 29-30 (R.H.G., B.S.M.).  
 T Barn Elms Res., one on Aug. 20 (B.A.R.).

**438 Little Ringed Plover**

Proof of nesting was found for only six pairs of Little Ringed Plovers in the London Area in 1950 (three less than in 1949) but at least twelve pairs were present and no doubt more nests would have been found if some of the sites had been continuously observed. The following notes summarise the more detailed account of the breeding pairs given in *B.B.*, 45, pp. 61-64, and give additional sight records

- E Certainly four, and probably six, pairs spent the summer at the site where Little Ringed Plovers were first found nesting in Essex in 1947. One nest was found but lack of observation prevented proof of breeding being obtained for the other pairs (A.E.J., E.R.P.). The second Essex locality (see *L.B.R.*, 1949, p. 32) has been flooded and is now unsuitable for nesting; a single bird was seen there on May 6 and 21, June 11 and 19 and July 7 (O.J.H.D., D.A.T.M.).  
 Walthamstow Res., one on April 26 and 27 and May 6 and 19 (D.F., A.E.J., R.E.S.); King George V Res., three on May 18 (P.F.C.R.); Sewardstone G.P., two on May 12 (M.J.A., A.L.C.); Berwick Pond, two on July 2 and one on July 3 (M.J.A.).  
 H Coition was seen between two birds at a gravel pit on June 19 but no nest was found; only one bird was seen when the site was next visited on July 4 (O.J.H.D., D.A.T.M.).  
 At another gravel pit one-two were seen in June and early July but there was no evidence of breeding (A.G., E.H.W.).  
 M A pair nested at each of four gravel pits, and another pair is believed to have nested at London Airport. One to four were seen on Staines Moor and at Perry Oaks S.F. on many dates between April 1 (Staines Moor) and October 3 (Perry Oaks—a late date).

Occasional birds were seen at the reservoirs; at West Kempton one-three stayed from April 7 until June 3, when the water level was raised (many observers).

- K One seen at a gravel pit on May 23 and 27 (J.S.S.B.) and June 4 and 10 (F.J.H.).
- S One pair nested on a clinker dump at a gravel pit—the first breeding record for the county (E.G.P.). Barn Elms, one on April 17 (G.E.); Richmond Park, one on a flooded cornfield on April 28 (R.W.HN.); Walton S.F., two on August 6 and 7 (J.H., P.A.D.H.).

#### 440/1 Golden Plover

- H Near Aldenham Res., c. 70 on Jan. 28, five on Nov. 11 and nine on Nov. 23 (E.H.W.). Barnet, 21 on Dec. 3 (S.K.). London Colney-Napsbury-Tyttenhanger district, flocks of between 40 and 75 in March and Sept.-Dec. (E.R.G.K., W.D.M. *et al.*). Radlett Airfield, present from Nov. 10, 1949 (see *L.B.R.*, 1949, p. 33) to Apr. 12; maxima c. 600 on Jan. 3 and 170 on Feb. 20; up to 12, Oct.-Dec. (A.G., B.L.S., E.H.W.). Near Rickmansworth, one on Oct. 1 and five on Dec. 9 (H.F.G.). Shenley, c. 220, Mar. 12-15, and 15 on Apr. 8; 30-60 in October and November, and 340 on Dec. 10 (W.D.M., E.H.W.). Watford S.F., one on Mar. 4 and 14 on Dec. 9 (P.R.K., B.P.P.).
- M Brent Res., one on Mar. 8 (A.G.G.T.). Kingsbury, three on Oct. 27 (A.A.J.A.). Perry Oaks S.F., up to three, Oct.-Nov.; Sipson-Cranford-Heathrow Airport, 11-22 in August, October and November; Staines Moor, c. 200 on Jan. 25, 100-120 on Mar. 1 and 40-50 on Mar. 12; up to c. 100, Dec. 6-30 (many observers). Yeading-Greenford area, two flocks of c. 70 and c. 30 on Feb. 14 (H.A.B.).
- K Abbey Wood Marshes, one on Dec. 31 (J.F.B., K.H.P.). Dartford Marshes one on Oct. 15 (R.W.HN.).
- S Beddington S.F., up to three, Jan.-Feb., and up to 35 in December (B.W.B., A.J.H., B.S.M., D.B.P.). Esher, one on Dec. 3 (D.P.).
- T Barn Elms Res., one on Feb. 5 (C.L.B.).

#### 444 Grey Plover

- H Aldenham Res., one on Oct. 5 (E.H.W.).
- M Brent Res., one on Sept. 5 and one on Sept. 23 (A.G., E.H.W.). Staines Moor, one on Apr. 5 (W.H.D.W.).

#### 446 Dotterel

- M Ten together, of which three were in summer plumage, were discovered at London Airport (Heathrow) on Aug. 26 by E.L.C. and P.J.HN. Seven were seen on the 27th, five on the 28th, one on the 30th (thirteen observers).

**449 Lapwing**

M/S Inner London, single birds and flocks up to 200 were seen flying over Brompton, Chelsea, Cripplegate, Hyde Park, Holland Park, Kensington Gardens, St. James's Park and Waterloo, mostly during the winter months (D.V.F., E.M.N., E.H.W. *et al.*). A few birds were seen on the ground: one by the Round Pond in Kensington Gardens on Dec. 21 (M.S.D.), three in Battersea Park on Dec. 21 and two on Dec. 22 (A.H.J.).

S Richmond Park, four pairs bred (R.W.HN.). For a history of the breeding of this species in the park since part of it was ploughed, see *L.B.R.*, 1943-1948.

**452 Oystercatcher**

M Brent Res., one on Dec. 15 (D.A.B., J.C.Ld.). Edmonton, Angel Road, two on Aug. 29 on the exposed bed of the canal (E.H.W.). Staines Res., one on Oct. 22 and two on Oct. 29 (R.dac., R.W.HN., C.C.R.).

K Thames Marshes, Dartford district, one on Oct. 7, 8, 31 (F.J.H., G.M.).

S Beddington S.F., one on Oct. 14-16 (P.L.G.B., A.J.H., B.S.M.).

T Barn Elms Res., two on May 22 (E.W.F.).

**456 Stone-Curlew**

K Hayes, one shot by a keeper on Barnet Wood Estate on Apr. 24 (G.E.M.).

**462 Black Tern**

An account of the passage of Black Terns in the country generally in the spring of 1950 is given in *B.B.*, 44, pp. 170-173, and in the autumn on pp. 317-318.

*Spring passage:—*

E King George V Res., eight-nine on May 14 (P.F.C.R.), up to 63 on May 17 (F.R.).

H Aldenham Res., two on May 15 (E.H.W.). West Hyde G.P., 23 on May 14 (F.H.J.).

M Brent Res., three on May 12, 12 on May 14, 16 on May 16, seven on May 17 (E.C.O., E.H.W. *et al.*). Poyle G.P., five on May 14 (M.S.H.). Ruislip Res., six on May 14 and three on May 24 (T.L.B., M.E.J.). Staines Res., up to 12 on May 13, 47 on May 14, 121 on May 16, and up to 109 on May 17 (eleven observers). These big flocks at Staines were the largest recorded in the country (*op. cit.*, p. 171).

T Barn Elms Res., two on May 11, up to 17 on May 12-14, 40 on May 18, one on June 29 (fourteen observers).

K Ruxley G.P., c. 20 on May 21 (E.H.G.).

S Gatton Park, four on May 14, one on May 15 (C.M.A., G.L.A.). Richmond Park, two on May 12 (R.W.HN., G.L.S.).



*Autumn passage:—*

- M Kempton Res., one on Oct. 1 (F.H.J.). Perry Oaks S.F., one on Aug. 8 and one on Sept. 3 (F.H.J., B.P.P.). Staines Res., two on July 24, up to 12 from Aug. 23-29, and up to five on many dates in September; 27 on Oct. 1, 14 on Oct. 7, and one on Oct. 11 (many observers).  
 M/S Inner London, one resting on the mud and in flight over the Thames at Chelsea between Chelsea and Albert Bridges on Sept. 17 (P.D., E.M.N.). This is the second record for Inner London.  
 T Barn Elms Res., one on Aug. 6 (J.MCH.), and one on Sept. 17 (C.L.B.).

**467 Sandwich Tern**

- M Perry Oaks S.F., one on Sept. 30 (B.W.B., D.B.P.). Poyle G.P., one on May 28 (R.W.HN.). Staines Res. and King George VI Res., three on July 3-5 (K.S.T.), seven on Aug. 21 (D.I.M.W.), and c. 20 on Sept. 12 (P.F.Y.).

**469/470 Common/Arctic Tern**

Reported in small numbers on spring passage, and in exceptionally large numbers in Middlesex on autumn passage. For a report on autumn passage in many parts of the country, see *B.B.*, 44, p. 318.

*Spring passage:—*

Evidence of spring passage was limited to 13 records for the whole of the London Area, not more than five birds together being reported on any occasion, on dates from May 3-30.

*Autumn passage:—*

Noted from July 23 to Oct. 14 on many dates, with numbers not exceeding three until mid-August, when 226 were reported on Aug. 21 at King George VI Res. (D.I.M.W.); on Aug. 23 counts varying from 300-500 were made at Staines Res. (E.E.G., W.N.M., B.B.P.), but the next day no more than 20 remained. Small numbers were noted throughout September, with a maximum of 25 on Sept. 24 (F.H.J.). In October the passage continued until the 14th, the maximum on one day being seven on Oct. 1.

**471 Little Tern**

- M Brent Res., six on May 15 (E.H.W.). Staines Res., one on Aug. 23 (B.P.P., N.H.P.) and one from Sept. 21-23 (A.J.B., E.E.G.).

**474 Sabine's Gull**

An account of the presence of several Sabine's Gulls in the country during the autumn is given in *B.B.*, 44, pp. 254-256, together with a summary of many observers' notes on field characters and behaviour.

- M Numerous observers have sent in very full details of two seen at Staines Res. The adult was first reported on Sept. 11 by F.J.F.B. and independently on Sept. 13 by M.C., W.N.M., R.H.M.R., E.H.W.; it was joined on Sept. 18 by an immature bird (F.H.J., B.A.R., A.G.G.T.). Neither was seen after Sept. 27. These were the first recorded in the London Area during the present century.

**477 Little Gull**

M Staines Res., one immature from Jan. 21-28 (W.N.M., A.V.T., C.A.W., W.H.D.W. *et al.*). Inner London, Regent's Park, a first-winter bird with Black-headed Gulls on Dec. 12 (K.P.).

**478 Black-headed Gull**

M The colony at Perry Oaks S.F. showed a considerable decrease on previous years. Although over 200 nests were seen, many were destroyed, and a count on May 28 gave 158 occupied nests (C.A.W.). The first young were seen on the wing on June 18, and an unfledged brood was seen as late as Aug. 12.

The following recoveries of birds ringed in the London Area were notified during 1950:

<i>Date and place of ringing.</i>	<i>Date and place of recovery.</i>
18.iii.49—Victoria Embankment (W.D.P.) .....	13.i.50—Where ringed (T.L.B.).
	11.iii.50—Barn Elms Res.
19.i.46—Putney Bridge (T.L.B.) .....	2.ii.50—Where ringed.
12.i.49—Kensington Gardens (D.G.) .....	6.iii.50—R. Thames at County Hall.
6.ii.50—Temple Embankment (T.L.B.) ...	April 1950—Barn Elms Res.
30.i.49—Queen Mary Res. (P.A.D.H.) .....	20.v.50—Horsens, Jutland, Denmark.
24.x.49—Victoria Embankment (T.L.B.) .....	11.vi.50—Stone, near Dartford, Kent (dead).

**482 Herring-Gull**

The highest numbers reported during the year were 500 at Epsom S.F. (Surrey) on Jan. 24 (H.B.), and 691 counted from a launch on Jan. 29 over 20 miles of the Thames through London (C.B.A., E.M.N., E.R.P.).

**484/485 Lesser Black-backed Gull**

The late summer passage produced reports of large flocks at some places; at Roehampton Golf Course (Surrey) flocks seen almost daily in August and September averaged 200, with a maximum of 298 on Sept. 20 (R.W.H.N.). Winter records of small numbers came from many localities, with a maximum of eight at Hampton filter beds (Middlesex) on Dec. 23 (P.F.Y.). For a recent report by J. A. G. Barnes on the status of the Lesser Black-backed Gull in winter, see *B.B.*, 45, pp. 3-17.

M/S Inner London, winter records from Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, Lambeth and Westminster.

**486 Great Black-backed Gull**

Appears to be increasing steadily in the London Area in winter. The Hampton filter beds again produced some high totals: Jan. 2, 220; Jan. 18, 156; Feb. 4, 149; Dec. 17, 148; Dec. 23, 126 (E.W.P., P.F.Y.). A census over 20 miles of the Thames through London on Jan. 29 gave 235 (C.B.A., E.M.N., E.R.P.).

**487 Glaucous Gull**

M Brent Res., an adult on Jan. 10 was described as being considerably larger than nearby Herring-Gulls (E.C.O.).

K Swanscombe Marshes, an immature watched for two hours on July 30 (J.F.B.). This is an unusual date, but the record is supported by good field notes.

**489 Kittiwake**

M King George VI Res., one immature on July 29 (P.J.H., R.dac.). Southgate, Broomfield Park, an injured bird, which later died, was picked up on Feb. 27 (V.H.B.).

T Barn Elms Res., one on Feb. 21 allowed an exceptionally close approach but apparently was not injured (V.H.B.).

K Swanscombe S.F., one immature found dead on Nov. 5 (W.I.B.).

**502 Little Auk**

M The wing and foot of one found dead at King George VI Res. by G.S. in February have been seen by the Committee and the identification confirmed (see also Bulletin No. 43 of the British Trust for Ornithology, p. 6).

**503 Puffin**

M Inner London, one was found alive in Liverpool Road, Islington, in late September, a photograph appearing in "The Star" of Sept. 24 (W.G.T.).

**504 Corncrake**

M Staines, one first seen on the ground in long grass near the reservoirs was flushed three times and satisfactorily identified on Jan. 29 (H.C.H.). Winter records are not unknown, according to the *Handbook*.

**509 Water-Rail**

B Denham, one on Jan. 15 (H.F.G.).

H Moor Mill, one-two seen in January, March, August and September, and a pair during the breeding season (S.A., A.G., W.D.M., E.H.W., W.H.D.W.). Hamper Mill, one in January and December (H.F.G., G.K.M.C.). Rickmansworth, two on Jan. 1 (E.L.C., A.J.H.), and two on Dec. 16 (N.H.P.).

M Staines Moor, one on Dec. 20-22 (D.B.P.). Stanwellmoor, three by the Wraysbury River on Dec. 16 (I.A.W.). Uxbridge, one on Jan. 19 (T.B.). West Hyde G.P., one on Jan. 1 (C.A.W.).

K Abbey Wood Marshes, four on Dec. 31 (J.F.B.). Lullingstone, one on Dec. 17 (J.S.S.B.). Ruxley G.P., one on Nov. 11 and one on Dec. 16 (D.M.E., F.J.H.). Slades Green, one on Apr. 27 (W.I.B.).

S Barn Elms Res., one on March 1 (G.C.L.) Beddington S.F., one or two on Nov. 4/5, and one on Dec. 20 (A.J.H., B.S.M.). Fetcham, one on Dec. 27, 1949, one on Jan. 14, two on March 12 (H.J.B.). Richmond Park, one heard on several dates between March 31 and May 2 (R.W.H.N.), and one seen on Dec. 17 (P.C.). Inner suburbs, Wandsworth Common, one present during severe weather in the first two weeks of November was seen walking on the ice of a frozen pond (F.W.L.).

### 511 Coot

M One ringed in St. James's Park on 9.xi.49 by T.L.B. was recovered at Barking (Essex) on 21.iv.50.

### 519 Red-legged Partridge

B Iver, regular resident in the district (A.V.T.).

E Epping Forest, pair seen on May 21 (W.C.D.), eight on Aug. 13 (S.K.).

H Notes have been received from one observer (S.K.) indicating that in the Barnet By-Pass, Ridge, North Mimms, Shenley and London Colney areas this is a widespread and regularly breeding resident. In addition there are a number of records from the Moor Mill, Old Parkbury and Hamper Mill areas (many observers), with ten birds seen on Nov. 29 at Moor Park (T.L.B.), and 15-16 at Hamper Mill on Dec. 2 (T.L.B., B.P.P.).

M Maintaining its status in the Staines, Perry Oaks, Harmondsworth, Cranford area, with many records of breeding (many observers). Perry Oaks S.F., from eight eggs of an abandoned nest seven young were hatched under a hen and successfully reared (D.G.); 32 were seen at Perry Oaks on Oct. 3 (H.A.B.). Osterley Park, one pair bred (H.A.B.), probably the innermost breeding record for the London Area.

K Thames-side marshes, breeding recorded in several areas (J.S.S.B., J.F.B., W.I.B.); Hayes, one or two pairs present (J.S.S.B.). Chelsfield, a pair on May 14 (W.I.B.).

### 520 Quail

K Shoreham, a male seen and heard on June 4 (J.S.S.B.).

# Black Redstarts in the London Area, 1950

By N. J. P. WADLEY

## INTRODUCTION

THE half-century closed with a further marked increase of the breeding population recorded in the Society's area. There were thirteen pairs in the City of London and a record total of twenty-four broods. One first clutch and one second brood failed, but each of these pairs raised a third brood successfully. Sixty-nine young flew, or seven fewer than in 1949 from nineteen broods. The season started later than in the previous year, owing no doubt to the severe weather in the period April 23rd-27th, when snow fell to a depth of 4-6 inches in the City. This cold spell took toll of the earliest nest which was then due to hatch.

One nest threatened by demolition operations was saved by the initiative of a member. He persuaded the workmen to drill open the floor over the nest and carried the young, which were nearly fledged, to some nearby cover. They survived and were seen being fed by the parents in their new territory a few days later.

First broods, with one exception, fledged between June 2nd and June 26th, but several pairs, by a remarkable contraction of the normal breeding cycle, had brought their second broods off by July 19th-31st, or only slightly later than the year before.

Adult males once more exceeded immature males by a small margin—eight to seven. The season was notable for the volume and persistence of song which much exceeded that of the previous year.

Pairs occupied sites at Brompton Cemetery and Croydon New Power Station, at both of which breeding had been recorded for the first time in 1949. Fetter Lane made a welcome come-back with two certain pairs and unconfirmed reports of a third.

## SUMMARY OF BREEDING RECORDS:

I. *Cripplegate Area*: (a) Bridgewater Square: two young were reared from the first nest, but the second clutch of five was destroyed by hooligans before the eggs hatched. A third set was laid in a new nest and two juveniles fledged (S.D.H.).

(b) Jewin Crescent: the first clutch failed to hatch in the bitter weather of late April. A second brood of three and a third of four were successful (S.D.H., A.J.H., E.H.M., E.H.W.).

(c) London Wall, Wood Street: two broods of two and three were raised. This cock again covered an unusually large territory (E.R.G.K., R.E.J.).

(d) London Wall, Fore Street: an immature cock which rarely sang had the largest family from the smallest territory with broods of five and four (R.E.J., E.R.G.K., C.A.W.).

(e) London Wall, White Cross Street: this area was occupied by an immature cock. Two broods were raised (R.B.W.).

II. *Ropemaker Street*: two broods, each of four young, fledged early, on May 18th and July 2/3rd (E.H.M., A.G., F.H.J.).

III. *Cannon Street*: the first nest was not found, but two juveniles were seen being fed out of the nest on June 16th, and a second brood of three was brought off late in July (H.C.H., F.J.H., E.H.M.).

IV. *Walbrook*: one brood was found in July, despite the new office building which had obliterated the old nesting area and much reduced the open space of the territory (H.O.J., F.J.H.).

V. *Paternoster Row*: the second of two broods was raised in a building in which noisy, incessant work was carried on the whole time. The interval of 47-48 days between fledgings was the longest yet recorded (F.J.H., E.H.W.).

VI. *Billiter Square*: despite the difficulties of this site two broods were again reared. However, it is doubtful whether they had any better experience than in 1949, when only one juvenile survived a fortnight out of the nest.

VII. *Gresham Street*: one late brood was raised, which appears to be the first record of breeding in this area. The discovery of three old nests suggests that breeding here may have been overlooked in some past year(s).

VIII. *Fetter Lane*: (a) *Norwich Street*: two broods were reported of which the second is referred to above (T.G., E.H.W., F.J.H., N.P.A.).

(b) *Little New Street*: an exceptionally late family of five (estimated date of fledging July 31st) was discovered in this restricted site: it is possible that there had been a first brood (T.G.).

IX. *Brompton Cemetery, Earl's Court*: adult male arrived March 27th; two juveniles were seen being fed by both parents on a gravestone, July 7th (M.C., W.G.T.).

#### BREEDING POSSIBLE:

X. *Croydon New Power Station*: male first seen May 3rd, joined by another male and a female May 10th. The second male left May 12th, but the remaining pair were regularly observed until early July (B.S.M.). A bird seen at Beddington Sewage Farm on July 2nd may have been one of this pair (B.W.B.).

#### NON-BREEDING RECORDS:

Inner London: there were no records this year of males occupying territories for extended periods without evidence of a female or breeding. But the records show waves of unmated males in the London area since 1942, as follows:—

1942	16-23	1946	3
1943	16	1947	8-10
1944	'considerable reduction'	1948	14
1945	10	1949	7

1950 3

Single birds were reported from Hatcham Road, S.E.15, a male singing May 5th (D.V.F.): Victoria and Albert Museum, May 5th (C.I.): Featherstone Buildings, W.C.1, July 4th (R.H.G.).

Outer London: *Middlesex*: Staines, King George VI Reservoir, April 16th (A.E.J.): *Kent*: Stone Marshes, Oct. 15 (A.G.G.T.).

#### WINTER RECORDS IN THE BREEDING AREA, 1949-50:

Many observers reported the adult male and the female or immature male which remained in Cripplegate during the winter months. The male was seen in several areas and intermittently from November to March, when it took up the Jewin Crescent territory, but the brown bird was nearly always to be found within 100 yards of the Coachman's Cottage, November to February (H.M., D.V.F., A.W.B., E.H.W., E.H.M.).

#### OTHER WINTER RECORDS:

*Surrey*: Beddington Sewage Farm: one, Nov. 25th-Dec. 16th; two, Dec. 17th-20th; three, Dec. 21st-31st (B.S.M., A.J.H., A.G.G.T., B.W.B., D.P., R.H.G.).

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

This report has only been possible through the co-operation of over thirty observers who this year sent in 80 communications—a record response. Again I have to thank S. D. Herington for many perceptive and timely observations. T. Gascoigne, F. J. Holroyde, E. H. Warmington, E. H. Mitcham, Miss M. Curtis, and B. S. Milne went to considerable trouble in providing detailed information of great value. Thanks are also due to the numerous other observers whose records have been entered on the permanent files.

#### FUTURE REPORTS:

Observers are once more asked to give attention to early records in March and April. Any reports from new areas, on behaviour—pairing, nest-building, display and coition—and on food taken to the young, will be especially welcome.

## Errata

- L.B.R.*, 1948, p. 34. The male Black Redstart recorded at Stanmore, Middlesex, was seen on March 24 (not April 24).  
*L.B.R.*, 1949, p. 43. Lines 26, 27. For "November, 1926" read "November, 1925."

# The Census of Great Crested Grebes, 1950 and Summary of Results, 1946 to 1950

By W. D. MELLUISH

THE fifth successive summer census of Great Crested Grebes (*Podiceps cristatus*) in the London Area was made in 1950 by the Ornithological Section, as part of the ten-year sample census organised by the British Trust for Ornithology. The inquiry is mainly concerned with the study of fluctuations in the numbers of grebes, but those taking part were asked both to count the adult birds and to determine the numbers of breeding pairs where conditions allowed.

Early in June, during a spell of fine warm weather, thirty-six observers visited over 170 flooded gravel pits, reservoirs and lakes, finding 76 of these waters inhabited by grebes. A few changes were recorded, two of the Middlesex gravel pits having been filled in and two new pits added to the list; in Essex a pit at South Ockendon and the Hornchurch Chase lake were occupied for the first time.

The 1950 results show at once a marked increase in the number of adults, 554 being the total counted, compared with 393 in 1949.

When making comparison of the results year by year it has been customary to exclude the figures for those waters at which, for one reason or another, counts were not made in any one year, thus obtaining strictly comparable totals, and the adjusted figures given by this method for 1949 and 1950 are 393 and 527, showing a rise of 34%.

As the half-way stage of this inquiry has now been reached, it is proposed to consider the full results to date and in giving the detailed figures some provision has to be made for the occasions when waters were not visited. In such cases, since the object of the census is to determine as nearly as possible the total number of birds, estimates have been made and figures added by interpolation, using as a guide the rate of increase or decrease for the particular year on that of the previous year, given by the strictly comparable totals.

The percentage variations in the strength of the summer population shown, (a) by strict comparison and (b) by the estimated probable totals, are found to be:—

	1947 compared with 1946	1948 compared with 1947	1949 compared with 1948	1950 compared with 1949
(a) Strictly comparable	- 18 %	+ 33 %	+ 7 %	+ 34 %
(b) Estimated totals	- 18 %	+ 35 %	+ 7 %	+ 33 %

As there are only slight deviations between these two sets of figures, it would seem to be a fair assumption that the estimated totals are reasonably correct and the margin of error probably less than if no account were taken of the waters not visited, in arriving at the yearly totals. These figures are therefore used in the following table, the results being grouped under counties, with gravel pits and "other waters" shown separately.



## TOTAL ADULTS.

	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950
<i>Bucks</i>					
Gravel Pits	27	27	41	30	51
Other Waters	—	—	—	—	9
<i>Essex</i>					
Gravel Pits	19	12	11	11	11
Other Waters	47	40	62	72	90
<i>Herts</i>					
Gravel Pits	39	34	53	50	51
Other Waters	29	14	24	32	24
<i>Kent</i>					
Gravel Pits	5	2	3	2	2
Other Waters	2	—	—	—	—
<i>Middlesex</i>					
Gravel Pits	91	81	103	90	100
Other Waters	37	34	45	47	62
<i>Surrey</i>					
Gravel Pits	15	10	6	26	27
Other Waters	44	38	46	60	130
<b>TOTALS</b>					
Gravel Pits	196	166	217	209	242
Other Waters	159	126	177	211	315
<b>Grand Totals</b> (Estimated)	355	292	394	420	557
Actual number counted	346	243	381	393	554
Proportion of total re- presented by estimate	2.5 %	16.8 %	3.3 %	6.4 %	.5 %
<b>INDEX of Estd. Totals,</b> expressed as percen- tages of 1946 (=100)	100	82	111	118	157

The measure of the recent rise in the grebe population is best appreciated if reference is made to the two earlier censuses, of 1931 and 1935, when the totals were 225 and 202 respectively, so that there are now nearly two and a half times as many grebes in the London Area as there were nineteen years ago.

The effect of the cold spell in 1947 and the subsequent recovery of the species has been discussed before (*vide L.B.R., No. 12, p. 36*) and the great influence of the gravel pits traced (*vide L.B.R., No. 11, p. 33, and No. 13, p. 35*). It was noted in the report for 1949 that in that year, for the first time since this census was begun, more birds were counted at reservoirs and lakes than at gravel pits. In 1950 this trend was continued, although the numbers inhabiting the pits were greater than before, and the more open waters of the larger reservoirs appear to have attracted summer parties of non-breeding birds of some size, as the following June counts indicate:—40 at Walton, 34 at Staines and 25 at Barn Elms.

A few other points of interest arising from the 1950 results deserve mention. For the second year in succession there was a notable increase in the number of birds counted on Surrey waters, the total being within 5 of that for Middlesex, still the most favoured county. There

was also an exceptional rise in the figures for Bucks, which were double those of the previous year.

Observers reported 149 nesting pairs this season and although there are known difficulties in determining the breeding strength (*vide L.B.R.*, No. 12, p. 36, and No. 13, p. 35) and too much reliance must not be placed on the figures, they serve to emphasize the upward trend noted in 1949, when 89 pairs were counted, compared with 57 in 1948.

The grand total of 557 adult birds represents a rise of 57% since the present census was commenced and it remains to be seen if 1950 will prove to be a peak year in the series, or whether further increases will occur in the subsequent five yearly counts.

Thanks are due to P. A. D. Hollom and E. R. Parrinder for advice and to the following who took part in the census:—G. Ll. Ackers, Miss C. M. Acland, H. E. Andrews, R. S. Ashley, L. Baker, T. L. Bartlett, C. H. Bentham, Borough Road College (per J. Macdonald), E. H. Down, Miss E. M. Goom, R. W. Hale, L. F. Harris, Dr. J. M. Harrison, J. N. Hobbs, R. C. Hodgson, P. A. D. Hollom, F. J. Holroyde, A. E. Jolley, K. P. Keywood, F. R. Mann, A. Manning, W. N. Mitchell, D. A. T. Morgan, Miss E. Norris, D. E. Pomeroy, B. A. Richards, M. G. Ridpath, H. W. Rudd, P. F. C. Rumsey, B. L. Sage, Miss E. Souter, W. Vincent, Prof. E. H. Warmington, C. A. White, Dr. W. H. D. Wince.

## A Bird Census of St. James's Park and the Green Park, 1949-50

By S. CRAMP and W. G. TEAGLE

### 1. INTRODUCTION.

The repeat bird census of Kensington Gardens made in 1948/9 (1) showed the value of this method in revealing changes in bird populations, especially of the commoner species. Similar counts were made in St. James's Park and the Green Park in the winter of 1949/50 with the two-fold aim of providing a basis for assessing future changes and of comparing the winter bird populations of these parks with those of Kensington Gardens.

The counts were made in the mornings between November 1949 and March 1950, beginning in each case one hour after sunrise to ensure that no birds using the parks solely for roosting were included. As the gulls normally arrive from their roosts much later than this, the land areas of St. James's Park were counted first, then the Green Park, and finally the lake in St. James's Park. All areas in the two parks were actually visited, except for the island at the western end of the lake in St. James's Park, which was counted as accurately as possible from the banks. The winter of 1949/50 was not severe, and it is not thought that any of the counts were influenced by unusual weather conditions.

## 2. ST. JAMES'S PARK.

The results of the counts in St. James's Parks are shown below:—

TABLE 1.

Species.	1949.		1950.			Totals for 5 counts.
	Nov. 6.	Dec. 18.	Jan. 29.	Feb. 19.	Mar. 19.	
(3) Carrion-Crow	1	1	1	1	1	5
(11) Jay	2	—	—	1	—	3
(14) Starling	24	10	40	36	41	151
(41) Chaffinch	4	6	11	6	10	37
(61) House-Sparrow	392	403	551	367	325	2038
(89) Grey Wagtail	2	—	—	1	—	3
(90) Pied Wagtail	1	—	—	—	1	2
(98) Great Tit	2	—	1	2	—	5
(100) Blue Tit	8	8	9	10	19	54
(107/8) Marsh/Willow-Tit	1	—	—	—	—	1
(174) Mistle-Thrush	2	2	—	4	3	11
(175) Song-Thrush	—	—	1	4	1	6
(184) Blackbird	56	51	42	51	35	235
(208) Robin	6	3	2	2	2	15
(211) Hedge-Sparrow	—	1	2	4	1	8
(213) Wren	1	1	1	1	1	5
(277) Sparrow-Hawk	—	—	1	—	—	1
(317) Mallard	294	349	306	232	204	1385
(323) Wigeon	1	1	1	1	1	5
(328) Common Pochard	21	29	21	20	28	119
(330) Tufted Duck	85	207	420	471	267	1450
(375) Little Grebe	3	1	—	—	—	4
(480) Wood-Pigeon	4	15	22	64	57	162
(478) Black-headed Gull	181	329	65	225	1	801
(481) Common Gull	3	7	3	5	—	18
(482) Herring-Gull	1	1	1	1	—	4
(510) Moorhen	49	54	29	44	28	204
(511) Coot	71	88	67	51	37	314
Totals	1215	1567	1597	1604	1063	7046
No. of species	25	21	22	24	20	28

(The Mute Swan was not included in the counts. The numbers of "London Pigeons" were 53, 99, 61, 19 and 73 respectively.)

The numbers in the brackets before the name of each species refer to Witherby's *Check-list of British Birds* (1941), where the scientific names will be found.

Although St. James's Park is much smaller than Kensington Gardens (52 acres compared with 274 acres) the average number of species on each count was only slightly lower, 22.4 against 24.7. The five counts in St. James's Park produced 28 different species, and the three counts in Kensington Gardens 29. The great majority of these (22 species) were found in both parks. The seven species found in Kensington Gardens but not in St. James's Park were jackdaw, tree-creeper, coal-tit,

great spotted woodpecker, tawny owl, stock-dove and lesser black-backed gull. Except for the last, which is an occasional visitor to both parks, all are mainly birds of a habitat not found in St. James's Park—woodland, open to the public, with grass but no undergrowth. Three of them, jackdaw, great spotted woodpecker and tawny owl, occur occasionally in St. James's Park. There were six species (grey wagtail, the marsh/willow-tit, wren, sparrow-hawk, wigeon and little grebe) observed during the St. James's Park counts but not on the counts in Kensington Gardens. The grey wagtail and sparrow-hawk are occasional visitors to both parks, and the wren occurs in Kensington Gardens from time to time, usually during the winter months. The little grebe is a regular autumn visitor to the lake in St. James's Park and bred there as recently as 1945, but is only an occasional visitor to Kensington Gardens. The marsh or willow-tit is an unusual visitor to St. James's Park, neither species having been recorded there before 1949, but though this bird (and probably a second) was seen at intervals from October 1949 until March 1950, its identity was not definitely established. The wigeon joined the pinioned wigeon on the lake in the autumn of 1949, and has remained with them since.

The relative abundance of the dominant species of land-birds in the two parks is remarkably similar. In Kensington Gardens the five most abundant species on the three counts in 1948/9 were house-sparrow (2528), blackbird (272), starling (114), wood-pigeon (101) and blue-tit (59), whereas on the five counts in St. James's Park they were house-sparrow (2038), blackbird (235), wood-pigeon (162), starling (151) and blue-tit (54). There were important differences in the birds of the lakes, for in Kensington Gardens the black-headed gull (1590) was easily the most numerous, followed by mallard (282), tufted (281) and common gull (111), whereas in St. James's Park for the four counts between November and February (the March 19 count is excluded as by then almost all the wintering gulls had left) the ducks took the lead, with tufted (1183) and mallard (1181), followed by black-headed gull (800) and coot (277). For this, the absence of rowing and model boats from the lake in St. James's Park is probably mainly responsible.

The average density in St. James's Park was much higher than in Kensington Gardens, with 271.0 birds per 10 acres compared with 69.4. This is misleading, however, as the greater part of Kensington Gardens consists of open woodland, with the very low density of 5 birds per 10 acres. In St. James's Park only four of the nine habitats which were recognised in Kensington Gardens (1) are found—shrubberies and flower-beds, with adjoining paths; open grassland with scattered trees; water; and lawns, with some trees and shrubs, adjoining water. The density in the areas covered by these four habitats in Kensington Gardens was 336.5 birds per 10 acres, rather higher than that found in St. James's Park. The density of land-birds in these four habitats in Kensington Gardens was much higher than in St. James's Park (265.3 per 10 acres compared with 129.7) and the density of water-birds much lower (478.1 per 10 acres against 882.2).

## 3. THE GREEN PARK.

The results were as follows:—

TABLE 2.

Species.	1949.		1950.			Totals for 5 counts.
	Nov. 6.	Dec. 18.	Jan. 29.	Feb. 19.	Mar. 19.	
(3) Carrion-Crow	1	3	—	4	—	8
(11) Jay	2	1	—	—	—	3
(14) Starling	20	24	4	21	21	90
(41) Chaffinch	3	11	7	10	10	41
(61) House-Sparrow	432	405	168	138	206	1349
(70) Sky-Lark	1	—	—	—	—	1
(98) Great Tit	2	5	2	2	2	13
(100) Blue Tit	3	3	10	13	1	30
(102) Coal-Tit	—	—	—	—	2	2
(174) Mistle-Thrush	—	1	2	2	—	5
(184) Blackbird	37	28	40	24	11	140
(178) Redwing	2	—	—	—	—	2
(208) Robin	—	—	2	—	—	2
(237) Great Spotted Woodpecker	1	2	—	—	—	3
(380) Wood-Pigeon	5	12	7	13	14	51
Totals	509	495	242	227	267	1740
No. of species	12	11	9	9	8	15

(The totals for the "London" Pigeon were 47, 98, 36, 37 and 106 respectively.)

The Green Park (53 acres) is slightly larger than St. James's Park, but is much poorer in species, with a total of only 15 species on the five counts against 28 for St. James's Park. This is largely accounted for by the absence of water, the number of land species in St. James's Park being only slightly higher at 18. The density of the land areas in St. James's Park, however, is much higher, with 129.8 birds per 10 acres against 65.6 in the Green Park. The Green Park has no shrubberies (the private gardens adjoining the park on the eastern side were not included in the counts, though most of the birds breeding there use the park for feeding), which provided the greatest density of land-birds in both St. James's Park and Kensington Gardens. It consists almost entirely of two of the habitats recognised in Kensington Gardens—open grassland, with scattered trees, and woodland, open to the public, with grass but no undergrowth, and a comparison can more profitably be made with the results for these two areas in Kensington Gardens, which were 19 species with a density of 6.9 birds per 10 acres. The species in these two habitats in the two parks are similar, for, excluding two species from both lists which are occasional visitors, there are thirteen species common to both, and four (jackdaw, tree-creeper, tawny owl and stock-dove) which were found in the Kensington Gardens counts but not in the Green Park. (The tawny owl is not infrequently seen in the Green Park, and the jackdaw occasionally.) The average density in the Green Park is nearly ten times as great. On the first two counts large numbers of house-sparrows were feeding on the seeds

of knot-grass (*Polygonum aviculare* L.), which covered a large area in the north-east corner of the park usually under grass, so that these may give a false impression of the normal population. Excluding these, the average density for the last three counts was 46.3 birds per 10 acres, or more than six times greater than that for similar habitats in Kensington Gardens. Most of this difference is due to the much higher population of house-sparrows in the Green Park (32.2 birds per 10 acres on the last three counts compared with only 2.2 birds per 10 acres in Kensington Gardens). In the Green Park there are groups of hawthorns in several parts of the woodland which afford a necessary and easy retreat, from human beings and the numerous dogs, for many species, especially house-sparrows, chaffinches and blackbirds, which prefer cover which is not too high. The dominant species are strikingly similar in both St. James's Park and Kensington Gardens, with house-sparrow (1349), blackbird (140), starling (90), and wood-pigeon (51) again the four most numerous species, although the chaffinch (41) replaces the blue tit in the fifth place.

The following table shows the average numbers of blackbirds, starlings, wood-pigeons and blue tits to each 100 house-sparrows found in the three parks:—

TABLE 3

	Kensington Gardens.		St. James's Park.	The Green Park. 1949/50.
	1925.	1948/9.		
House-Sparrow	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Blackbird	0.7	10.7	11.4	10.4
Starling	14.5	4.5	7.4	6.7
Wood-Pigeon	8.9	4.0	7.9	3.8
Blue Tit	1.0	2.3	2.6	2.2

The similarities in the relative abundance at the present time is striking, especially in view of the different character of the three parks. The figures for Kensington Gardens in the winter of 1925 (based on the results in (2)) show the very considerable differences twenty-five years ago, when the starling was easily the second most numerous species, with the blackbird in sixth place, less numerous even than the great-tit.

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# The Duck Census in the London Area, 1949-51

By R. C. HOMES

## INTRODUCTION

THIS paper continues the review in the *London Bird Report* for 1948 of the winter duck population of the London Area and includes the census results up to the end of the winter of 1950-51. Figures are now available for four consecutive winters for all species except mallard, which was not included in the first winter.

Mallard population was appreciably higher in the winter of 1950-51 than it was in the original series of counts twelve years before, a comparison of waters counted in both years showing a rise of 32-33%. Unfortunately results are not sufficiently complete for the winters of 1948-49 and 1949-50 to trace the recovery after the hard winter of 1946-47 but they suggest that it largely took place in the second breeding season following. The numbers of teal, wigeon, shoveler and goldeneye visiting the Area are relatively so small that the element of chance in the extent of their inclusion on census dates, usually four weeks apart, is much more pronounced than in the commoner species. The counts are summarized, however, under the species concerned, but must be considered of purely local interest. Goosander and smew are no more numerous, but relatively to the rest of the south of England the numbers have much greater significance, and in winters when there is no abnormal influx the highest totals may be thought of roughly in terms of 150 goosander and 100 smew.

Common pochard and tufted duck are, with mallard, the most numerous ducks in the Area, their numbers being significant in comparison with other localities. An average of the peak numbers recorded in three of the last four winters gives a figure of 1361 for pochard and 2638 for tufted duck. For both species one of the winters, though not the same one, has been exceptional. In 1947-48 pochard reached a peak of 2689 and in 1949-50 tufted duck did not exceed 1782.

Inevitably the counts are not all equally complete and figures have been interpolated where possible to make comparison more easy. This has been done for all waters omitted on any particular date by applying to the total occurring there on as similar a date as possible in another year the percentage increase or decrease shown by the waters which were counted on the dates in question in both years. For those waters with a more or less static winter population figures have been inserted on the basis of the counts on adjacent dates in the same year, adjusted where necessary for the trend at other waters on the missing date. Only in the figures for mallard have the interpolations reached an important part of the total, and then only in the first half of the winter of 1949-50. Where the waters missed on any date have been too significant, or where key waters have been omitted in the case of the rarer species, the figures for that date have been ignored and no attempt at interpolation has been made.

MALLARD. *Anas p. platyrhyncha* L.

In the earlier review of mallard counts (2), little material was available for comparison but a possible decrease of 30% was suggested for the winter of 1947-48 compared with that of 1938-39. A good way of comparing the level of winter population in different years is to take the average of the figures between the beginning of November and the end of January. If the three counts within this period in the winter of 1938-39 are taken for a series of waters, which were also counted in 1950-51 and represent about two-thirds of the total, an average of 2287 in the first winter compares with an average in the later winter of 3030, an increase of 32-33%. Counts in the intervening winters of 1948-49 and 1949-50 are too incomplete to be reliable, but such results as are comparable suggest that figures on 1st January 1949 were 15.6% below 1938-39 and on the 15th January 1950 about 27% above that winter.

Not enough winters have yet been studied to provide a reliable index, but on the basis of the above figures it seems as if in the winter of 1947-48 the after-effects of the severe winter of 1946-47 were pronounced, while the three relatively mild winters following more than sufficed to make up the deficiency, the big recovery apparently taking place in 1949. It is tempting to accept this hypothesis as correct, especially as great crested grebes (*Podiceps c. cristatus*) are known to have followed a similar trend in the years 1948-1950 (1), the increase more than compensating for a previous decline. Unfortunately, however, the data for the three winters 1947-48 to 1949-50 rest on only one complete count in each winter, whereas for 1938-1939 and 1950-1951 an average of the three mid-winter counts is available. This average must eliminate many of the elements of chance but duck populations are extremely unstable and, as this average has not been obtainable for the whole period, the apparent rate of recovery should be treated with reserve.

Among the more interesting features of the census results was the appearance in the winter of 1949-50 of a much more pronounced peak in late October or early November than had been shown by previous counts. In October 1948, in contrast, there had been a distinct fall in numbers during the month. Whereas in 1949-50 numbers fell steeply after the peak on October 23rd and did not recover appreciably until the count in mid-January, in the winter of 1950-51 there was a similar peak in early November but numbers did not subsequently fall so markedly and in the four counts from October 8th to January 7th the total number of mallard on the waters included varied only between 3580 and 4417, the latter figure being on November 12th. On February 4th the count only covered half the population but showed a reduction of only 3% on the January figures for the same waters, so that the winter population remained between the limits given above.

TEAL. *Anas c. crecca* L.

While the numbers present in the winters of 1949-50 and 1950-51 were not much over half the peak figures for the previous two winters, it is not possible to draw any conclusions from this difference owing to the predilection of teal for thick cover in inland haunts, such as marshy



ground alongside rivers or small gravel-pits not included in the census; *e.g.*, about 90 were seen on such ground at Napsbury in January, 1951. The chief value of census work on the teal in our own area is, therefore, to record the size and movements of any big flocks. The largest flocks noted in the area during the period under review have been about 412 at Staines on January 17th, 1948, and 300 or more at the new King George VI reservoir on September 25th, 1949.

WIGEON. *Anas penelope* L.

The wigeon occurring in the area are found on very few waters and a high proportion is usually at Staines; *e.g.*, in early January, 1949, 255 out of a total of 290. At the same period two years later the total of 420 included a flock of 355 at the King George VI reservoir. These figures are the highest recorded since the last summary. In the intermediate winter of 1949-50 the winter resident population was only about 100, though a few more were seen in the middle of March. It is obvious that much depends on the presence of the one large flock in the Staines district, and if this is absent numbers are far too small to have any real significance.

SHOVELER. *Spatula clypeata* (L.).

The influence of the spring passage was shown by the count on March 5th, 1949, with a total of 187, of which all but three birds were at Staines. Three weeks later there were still 156 in all. Counts in the early part of the following winter were incomplete, but at Staines there were flocks of 76 on September 25th and of 83 on November 20th, 1949. The usual drop was noted after this, leaving only 23 on December 18th, but on January 15th, 1950, there were again 100, all but one being at Staines. Counts in the middle of February, March and April were only 22, 35 and 31 respectively, the dates evidently not synchronizing with the spring passage.

COMMON POCHARD. *Aythya ferina* (L.).

Three relatively mild winters have supported the conclusion (2) that the peak population of 2721 in the winter of 1947-48 was abnormal and that an average winter maximum for the London Area was about a thousand birds. The peaks on census dates have been as follows:—1147 on January 1st, 1949; 1338 on December 18th, 1949; and 1600 on December 10th, 1950. While these figures exceed the thousand they fall well short of the peak in 1947-48. The exact timing of census dates obviously affects the date of the recorded peaks, which vary on present data between December 10th and January 17th.

A decline in numbers may occur early in January and becomes pronounced before the end of the month. Though bad weather has resulted in most of the February counts being incomplete, it is apparent from a series of counts in early March that apart from the exceptional winter of 1947-48 the total has so far always fallen below 300 by the end of the first week of that month.

Large flocks have been recorded as follows:—Barn Elms, 610 on January 7th, 1951; Brent, 505 on December 11th, 1949; Staines, 309 on December 18th, 1949, and 349 on January 7th, 1951; Walthamstow, 553 on December 10th, 1950.

TUFTED DUCK. *Aythya fuligula* (L.).

It has previously been stated (2) that the peak winter population is remarkably steady at 2500-3000. Normally figures build up to a peak about the end of the year, but in the winter of 1949-50 the usual December influx does not seem to have taken place, and the totals for December 18th, January 15th and February 19th show an average of 1703 with very little variation between the three dates, compared with peaks of 2692 and 2434 in the previous winters. The winter of 1950-51 reverted to pattern with a peak of 2789 on January 7th, confirming the statement in the earlier paper. From the end of February onwards the graphs for the last four winters show a close similarity, the departure of the bulk of the winter population occurring between the middle of February and the middle of March.

Notable concentrations since the last paper have been 1520 at Barn Elms on January 7th, 1951, 1320 being still present on February 4th, 1951 and 680 on March 4th, 1951. It is remarkable that on the January date the flock represented over 54% of the total number of tufted ducks counted and in February over 76%, whereas in March it was only 37%, although the total numbers were slightly over the February figure. This could have been due to a local dispersal of the Barn Elms birds or to their departure northwards and replacement by a general passage movement through the Area. The latter seems the more likely explanation.

GOLDENEYE. *Bucephala c. clangula* (L.).

The last review ended with an unusually large total for the Area of 59 on January 1st, 1949. This had fallen to 20 and 19 on March 5th and 26th respectively. The winter of 1949-50 showed a normal pattern, rising to a maximum of 43 on February 19th, with a drop to 24 by March 19th and 10 on April 16th. The decline in numbers already noted (2) was even more in evidence in 1950-51 when the largest total on any of the census dates was 18. Whereas the average largest flock at Staines in the winters of 1929-30 to 1933-34 was 40 and from 1934-35 to 1938-39 only 27, in the last two winters on the census dates the greatest numbers there have been 19 and 2.

GOOSANDER. *Mergus m. merganser* L.

A series of relatively mild winters since the last review has seen little change in the goosander population in the Area. The only complete mid-winter count in 1948-49 was of 119 on January 1st; in 1949-50 the maximum was 141 on February 19th, and in 1950-51 it was 155 on March 4th, when passage birds had evidently joined the wintering birds which were unusually late in leaving. In 1949, in comparison, only 58 remained on March 5th.

The largest concentrations in the last three winters have been about 80 at Island Barn reservoir on January 1st, 1949, and 81 at Walton

reservoirs on March 4th, 1951. It appears that in winters not characterized by exceptional weather conditions the average population does not much exceed 150, and it remains to be seen whether in more severe weather the much larger flocks previously described will recur or whether these were quite abnormal under any conditions.

**SMEW.** *Mergus albellus* L.

The total on January 1st, 1949, published as 91 (2) should be amended to 112 in the light of counts subsequently received. By March 5th smew had left some localities, but on that date a flock counted at different times of the day as 42 and 64 was at the Brent reservoir, so that there was little change in total. On March 26th only 5 remained. It was suggested (2) that the peak numbers in winters without any abnormal influx might prove to be about a hundred, and the 1949-50 results, as well as those for 1948-49, confirm this hypothesis. Thus on January 15th, 1950, the total was 99 and on February 19th there was a count of 102. By March 19th the number had fallen to 21, the usual passage period being straddled by the census dates.

In the winter of 1950-51 numbers were appreciably higher on January 7th, when 184 birds were counted, almost one-third being adult males. This total was probably low as it included only 59 at the Brent reservoir, where there had been 95 on the previous day and counts of 83 and 100 were made in the next fortnight, with a maximum of 119 on February 10th. This is the largest gathering by two yet recorded in the Area. Eighty were still present on March 4th.

Though the annual and seasonal fluctuations are of more importance than the absolute totals, it is interesting to note that on occasions when large numbers of ducks have been present on the census dates the following totals have been obtained:—

January 1st, 1949	7781	including 292 interpolated.
January 15th, 1950	7102	including 245 interpolated.
December 10th, 1950	7940	including 596 interpolated.
January 7th, 1951	9518	no interpolation.

Letters of thanks from the International Wildfowl Inquiry Committee have been sent to the regular counters, whose persistence has built up a far more complete picture of the duck population around London than could ever be obtained before. Similar census work on other aquatic species has raised the question of what is an adequate sample. The movements of ducks within the Area are so variable that it seems worth while to persevere with the full number of waters for a little longer or until a harder winter has provided a comparison with the relatively mild conditions of the last few years. Continued support from members will, therefore, be much appreciated.

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## Interim Report on the Starling Enquiry

THE enquiry which the Ornithological Section is conducting into the roosting habits of London starlings has now been in progress for three years. In this period over 4000 starlings have been ringed—2500 of these were caught at the roost in Trafalgar Square and the remainder trapped in members' suburban gardens. At first the enquiry was confined to a ringing experiment with the object of discovering whether the birds which roost in the centre of London are British residents, Continental immigrants or a combination of the two. But as the work progressed it was realised that little or nothing was known about many other aspects of the roosting habit and it was decided, *inter alia*, to attempt a monthly census of the birds using the central roosts and to re-survey the flight-lines. All this work, including the catching and ringing, is still going on and will certainly need to be continued into 1952. The starling is a variable bird and although our knowledge of its roosting in London is a good deal clearer than it was three years ago there are still problems and anomalies to solve. A detailed paper will be published in due course and the present interim report is limited to a rough outline, without documentation, of some of the findings, and the listing of the more interesting of the recoveries to date.

The monthly counts show that starlings now roost in the centre of London throughout the year and that the number using the roost never falls much below ten thousand. Contrary to popular belief maximum numbers are not in October but in June and July when the roost (largely confined to trees at this period) is swollen to a total approaching 100,000 by hordes of young birds, many of which appear to make the nightly journey to the central roost almost as soon as fledged. At this time, of course, there are no Continental starlings in the country and the roost is entirely composed of British birds. By October, when Continental birds are beginning to arrive on the East coast, numbers at the London roost have fallen to about 30,000. The decline from the summer peak is too steep to be entirely accounted for by normal mortality. It is likely that some of the juveniles move away from the London area for the winter and it is possible that some adults begin to roost in their nest holes in the late autumn. More observations are required on the duration of nest hole roosting.

The major change over from trees to buildings occurs in October but some tree roosts are occupied throughout the winter. Numbers at the roosts remain fairly constant during the winter months and it is therefore unlikely that appreciable numbers of Continental birds come into London. This is borne out by the ringing returns. To date (December 1951) 125 of the birds ringed in Trafalgar Square have been recovered and only two of these have been found abroad:—

T3913 ringed 20.12.49 found dead Katwijk, N. Holland, 4.6.50.

W0175 ringed 18.12.50 found dead Strijen, Holland, 20.3.51.

So far, then, there is no evidence that Continental starlings habitually roost in London; it seems, however, that some of the immigrants,

feeding perhaps in the outer suburbs, may occasionally get "caught up" with our own birds and fly in with them to the central roosts.

All but four of the remaining 123 recoveries are from places within twenty miles of Trafalgar Square and the majority are within the collecting area which has been outlined by tracing back the flight-lines. Birds recovered in the winter might be of Continental origin, but approximately 75% of the total were found in months when no Continental starlings are in the country.

The four recoveries in England outside the London Area are:—

RC790 ringed 7.2.50 shot at Higham, Kent, 13.7.50.

W0387 ringed 11.12.50 shot at Harlow, Essex, 13.1.51.

W0100 ringed 27.11.50 found dead Arlesey, Beds., 17.4.51.

RD352 ringed 16.1.50 found dead March, Cambs., 25.4.51.

These birds were all judged to be in immature plumage when ringed. It is known that some British juveniles wander for a time in early autumn and then move in a south or west direction; the above recoveries may indicate that some juveniles from other areas drift into London in the winter.

Members operating Potter traps in their gardens have so far caught five of the birds ringed in Trafalgar Square—B. Milne has caught two at Wallington, Miss D. A. Rook two at West Ewell and C. L. Collenette one at Richmond. Recoveries from the 1500 or so starlings ringed to date in the suburbs have mostly been at or near the place of ringing but six have been netted and released again at the roost in Trafalgar Square; these were three ringed by C. L. Collenette at Richmond, one by Leslie Baker at Ealing, one by A. E. English at Sutton and one by E. H. Down at Totteridge. A bird (judged to be an immature female) caught in Trafalgar Square on February 5th, 1951, had been ringed by P. S. Burns at Bishop's Stortford (30 miles N.N.W.) five days earlier.

E. R. PARRINDER

## Bird Ringing Report, 1949-50

**I**N the year ending October, 1950, the Society's return to the Bird Ringing Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology showed a big increase over the previous year. More than three thousand birds of 76 species (over three times the 1948-49 total) were ringed in the London Area and elsewhere. One reason for this high number was the contribution made by the organised group of the Society's ringers who caught and ringed 915 roosting Starlings in Central London. Another reason was the increasing number of members who are successfully operating small traps in their gardens throughout the Area. The influence of this new trapping is clearly shown by the following analysis. Even without the special case of the 915 Starlings, the number of adult birds trapped is more than double the number of nestlings ringed.

Recoveries of 80 birds ringed by members were notified this year and the more important of these affecting the London Area are given in the systematic list.

<i>Ringer.</i>	<i>Nestlings</i>	<i>Trapped</i>	<i>Total</i>
H. E. Andrews ... ..	—	5	5
C. B. Ashby ... ..	4	60	64
L. Baker ... ..	—	114	114
T. L. Bartlett ... ..	60	65	125
J. S. S. Beesley ... ..	—	24	24
A. H. Betts ... ..	—	10	10
Mrs. R. Brown ... ..	2	12	14
C. L. Collenette .. ..	—	90	90
S. Cramp ... ..	7	19	26
W. H. Dady ... ..	3	22	25
J. Farrand ... ..	—	121	121
R. S. R. Fitter ... ..	45	2	47
A. Gibbs ... ..	93	161	254
D. Goodwin ... ..	129	157	286
P. J. Hayman ... ..	3	3	6
R. W. Hayman ... ..	21	—	21
R. C. Homes ... ..	3	50	53
A. E. Jolley ... ..	—	23	23
Miss G. McLeish ... ..	7	—	7
G. E. Manser ... ..	39	355	394
B. A. Marsh ... ..	52	—	52
B. S. Milne ... ..	—	42	42
K. H. Palmer ... ..	3	11	14
W. D. Park ... ..	—	3	3
D. Parr ... ..	16	—	16
E. R. Parrinder ... ..	4	35	39
B. A. Richards ... ..	6	—	6
P. E. L. Simmonds ... ..	—	69	69
J. E. Taylor ... ..	23	—	23
W. G. Teagle ... ..	21	2	23
A. G. G. Thompson ... ..	30	—	30
J. A. Wigzell .. ..	32	112	144
Starling Enquiry ... ..	—	915	915
Total, 1949-50 ... ..	603	2432	3085
Total, 1948-49 ... ..	549	374	923

Completed schedules should be returned to the Bird Ringing Secretary, J. E. Taylor, 23 Belsize Crescent, N.W.3, as early as possible in September. The price of rings remains unchanged at 1s 10d per packet of 20.

#### LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS—*Continued from page 7.*

G. O. Warburg.	A. W. Wheeler.	J. D. Wood.
Prof. E. H. Warmington.	C. A. White.	R. W. Woods (per M.G.D.).
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K. West (per W.I.B.).	H. Wood (per H.F.G.).	R.S.R.F.).

## TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

**T**HE general form of the *Report* for 1950 remains unchanged. Strictly comparable treatment of the available material in the run of years leading up to and including 1950 will enable members to bind their copies conveniently to this year, if desired, and so provide a reference background to the Section's coming book. To what extent the *Report* may be varied in future is uncertain, though presumably it should continue to record the changing, and often improving, fortunes of the birds in and around London. Suggestions as to how this may best be done in the post-1950 period will be gladly received by the Committee.

The Recorders welcome notes on London birds from members and non-members alike, and will be pleased to send particulars of our programme of recording and field work on request.

### RECORDERS :

North of the Thames—A. Gibbs, 20 Windsor Road, N.3.

South of the Thames—J. F. Burton, F.R.E.S., 43 Eversley Road, Charlton, S.E.7.

Inner London—W. G. Teagle, F.Z.S., 20 Wendover Road, N.W.10.

A map of the Society's Area (1/-) and reprints of the cover drawing of the Sabine's Gull (4d) may be obtained from the General Secretary.

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Ordinary membership, open to anyone over the age of sixteen, costs One Pound annually, but members under twenty-one may pay Ten Shillings. Further information may be obtained from the Secretary at the above address or from Mr. R. C. Homes, the Regional Representative for the London Area.

## NATURAL HISTORY BOOKS

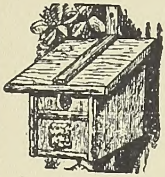
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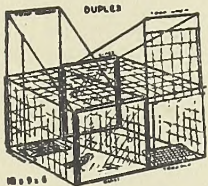
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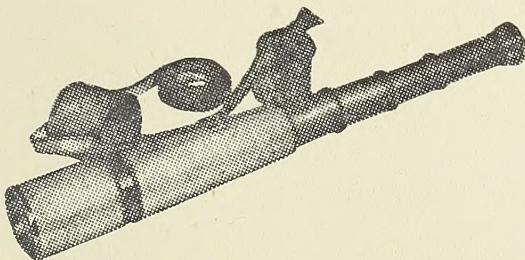
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